

Play Sufficiency Assessment

June 2026



Play Sufficiency Assessment
The City of Edinburgh Council
2026

Contents

Executive Summary	1	4.6. Ward 4 – Forth	23
1. Introduction.....	2	4.7. Ward 5 – Inverleith.....	23
1.1. Purpose	2	4.8. Ward 6 – Corstorphine / Murrayfield.....	24
1.2. Policy Context.....	2	4.9. Ward 7 – Sighthill / Gorgie.....	25
1.3. City of Edinburgh Council and Play Sufficiency Assessment.....	2	4.10. Ward 8 – Colinton / Fairmilehead	26
1.4. Requirements of the Play Sufficiency Assessment	4	4.11. Ward 9 – Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart.....	27
2. Play	5	4.12. Ward 10 – Morningside.....	28
2.1. Children’s rights	5	4.13. Ward 11 – City Centre	28
2.2. Value and benefits of play	5	4.14. Ward 12 – Leith Walk	29
2.3. The importance of outdoor play.....	6	4.15. Ward 13 – Leith	30
2.4. Types of play	6	4.16. Ward 14 – Craigminty / Duddingston.....	31
2.5. Play and inclusion.....	6	4.17. Ward 15 – Southside / Newington	32
3. Methodology.....	8	4.18. Ward 16 – Liberton / Gilmerton	33
3.1. Research Framework	8	4.19. Ward 17 – Portobello / Craigmillar.....	34
3.2. Assessing quantity and mapping.....	9	5. Engagement.....	36
3.3. Assessing Quality	9	5.1. Introduction	36
3.4. Assessing accessibility and inclusion.....	10	5.2. Children in Early Years	36
3.5. Analysis of the audits	11	5.3. Children in P1 to P5 pupils	39
3.6. Engagement	11	5.4. P6 to P7 Pupils	43
4. Quality, Quantity and Accessibility	15	5.5. Teenagers (S1 to S6 pupils)	47
4.1. Mapping.....	15	5.6. Additional Support Needs.....	52
4.2. Local Authority	16	5.7. Parents and carers	54
4.3. Ward 1 – Almond	20	5.8. Public.....	58
4.4. Ward 2 – Pentland Hills	21	5.9. Community Councils.....	59
4.5. Ward 3 – Drum Brae / Gyle	22	5.10. Focus groups	60
		5.11. Additional Data	72

6. Summary and Key Findings	74
7. Next steps	76
Appendix 1 - Case Studies.....	77
What does playground with a play value of Excellent look like?.....	77
What does playground with a play value of Very Good look like?	78
What does playground with a play value of Good look like?	79
What does playground with a play value of Fair look like?	80
Appendix 2 – Audit tools.....	81
Play Value Tool	81
Accessibility and inclusivity play space checklist:	82
Appendix 3 – Audits	83
Play Values – Council owned playgrounds	83
Play Values – Privately owned playgrounds	86
Trends over time	87
Appendix 4 – Spatial analysis	94
Mapping.....	94
Access	100
Play Standards	105
Accessibility and Inclusion	107
Appendix 5 - Engagement details	112
Appendix 6 – Engagement results	113
Early Years engagement	113
P1 to P5 Engagement results	115
P6 to P7 Engagement results	120
S1 to S6 Engagement results	126
Parents and carers - engagement results	131

Members of the Public - engagement results.....	136
Community Council - engagement results	138

Executive Summary

The Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) provides an overview of the quality, quantity and accessibility of outdoor play opportunities for children and young people across the local authority area.

This document brings together information from site audits, spatial analysis, local data and extensive engagement with children, young people, parents and carers, Community Councils and members of the public. It examines both formal and informal play opportunities within the urban environment, including greenspaces and natural spaces that support and foster play for children and young people.

Overall, the Play Sufficiency Assessment finds that:

- There is a wide network of both formal and informal outdoor play spaces across the local authority area.
- There are 205 publicly accessible formal areas of play (playgrounds), of which 159 are council owned and managed.
- The quality of formal play provision is variable and often below desired standards. The majority of playgrounds are rated as “Fair”, with only a small proportion achieving “Very Good” or “Excellent” play value, indicating a gap in high play value provision.
- The quality of formal play spaces varies considerably across the local authority, with some playgrounds not meeting expectations in terms of variety of play experiences and inclusivity.
- Engagement findings reinforce this with children, families and communities consistently identifying maintenance issues, broken equipment, litter and dog fouling as barriers to positive play experiences.
- The majority of properties have access to at least a Good, Very Good or Excellent playground provision. However, around one in five properties are only served by playgrounds with a play value of Fair.
- Between 2015 and 2025, the number of properties served by a play value of Fair decreased by 5%, indicating an improvement in access to better play provision.
- Children and families use local and nearby spaces for everyday play opportunities.
- The extensive network of greenspaces — including parks, woodlands, coastal areas and natural environments — forms a critical component of play provision, supporting informal play experiences.

- Inclusive play provision remains limited across Edinburgh. Whilst basic physical access is often present, many playgrounds lack the infrastructure and design features required to support genuinely inclusive play experiences.
- There are significant gaps in provision for older children and teenagers, whose needs often extend beyond playgrounds. There is a need for more social spaces, sport facilities, more activities and informal gathering spaces.
- Children and young people value fun places, active and adventurous play opportunities, alongside spaces for social interaction and informal “hanging out”.
- Although most children and young people reported feeling relatively safe, concerns relating to poor lighting (darker days in winter) and antisocial behaviour, influence how safety is perceived.
- Other barriers to the use of outdoor spaces include poor maintenance, environmental quality and lack of supporting infrastructure such as toilets, seating and shelter.

The findings of this Play Sufficiency Assessment will inform the Local Development Plan. It will also enable the development of a Play Action Plan to improve, protect and promote play opportunities for children and young people across the local authority. It will also support the local authority’s strategies related to children’s rights, health and wellbeing, open space strategy, greenspaces, active travel and community planning.

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

City of Edinburgh Council has prepared its Play Sufficiency Assessment. The purpose of this Play Sufficiency Assessment is to provide a clear and evidence-based understanding of the current provision of play opportunities for children and young people across the local authority. This includes examining the quantity, quality and accessibility of formal and informal play spaces.

This assessment aims to identify where good opportunities already exist, where gaps remain and the current barriers that prevent children and young people from playing outdoors. Ultimately, it will provide a baseline for future improvements that may be required to support children and young people's wellbeing, inclusion and all the benefits associated with play.

1.2. Policy Context

The requirement to undertake a Play Sufficiency Assessment is set out in [Planning \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#). Section 16D of the Act mandates that each planning authority must assess the sufficiency of play opportunities for children and young people within its area, as part of the evidence report for their Local Developments Plans (LDP). This ensures that needs, experiences, views and rights of children and young people are considered in future planning decisions, such as land use, development and place-making.

The importance of play is further reinforced in the [National Planning Framework 4](#) (NPF4), which under Policy 21 positions play, recreation and sports, as well as access to blue and green infrastructure as essential components of sustainable and liveable places. NPF4 requires local authorities to create rightful access to opportunities for play and recreation. Together the Planning Act and NPF4 establish a clear national expectation that play is integral in creating meaningful and high-quality places. NPF4 indicates that when planning for new, replacement or improved play provision the play provision should:

- i. provide stimulating environments
- ii. provide a range of play experiences including opportunities to connect with nature

- iii. be inclusive
- iv. be suitable for different ages of children and young people
- v. be easily and safely accessible by children and young people independently, including those with a disability
- vi. incorporate trees and/or other forms of greenery
- vii. form an integral part of the surrounding neighbourhood
- viii. be well overlooked for passive surveillance
- ix. be linked directly to other open spaces and play areas

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), is now incorporated into Scots Law, placing a duty on public bodies to uphold children's rights.

[The Play Strategy for Scotland](#) and its implementation plans, highlights the importance of play for children across all stages of their life and settings. It aspires for Scotland to be the best place live, where children's play is valued and protected. [The Vision for 2025-2030](#) adopts the Play theory of Change as a framework, where 'Parents', 'Place' and 'Practitioners' are the three drivers. Within 'Place', the vision emphasises the importance of children being able to access outdoor play opportunities in their local areas. It calls for play to be prioritised in public spaces, which should offer quality play experiences in safe, inclusive and welcoming to all.

1.3. City of Edinburgh Council and Play Sufficiency Assessment

The importance of play and place is well established within City of Edinburgh Council. This commitment is reflected in the existing works such as Play Strategy (2014), The Play Area Action Plan (2016) and the Open Space Strategy (2021). Together, these documents demonstrate the Council's ongoing dedication to strengthening play opportunities across the local authority and provide a foundation for the development of the Play Sufficiency Assessment.

In addition, the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy for Edinburgh 2024-2034 and the Sports Pitch Strategy for Edinburgh 2025 to 2035 complement the formal areas of play for children and young people.

Play Strategy 2014

City of Edinburgh Council's [Play Strategy \(2014\)](#) emphasises play as a fundamental right of every child (UNCRC Article 31) and the ambition for Edinburgh to be a child friendly city, where all children and young people have access to a variety of play opportunities. It emphasises a balanced risk-benefit approach to managing play opportunities, supports play across different settings, and children's rights to play freely and being able to make choices about their own play. One of the outcomes of this strategy is the availability of good and varied play places for children to play.

Play Area Action Plan 2011-2016

The [Play Area Action Plan](#) set out a five-year evidence-based programme to improve the quality, accessibility and distribution of publicly accessible play spaces across the city, in line with City of Edinburgh Council's Play Strategy and the Open Space Strategy. Based on audits and using a play value scoring system, the plan functioned as a delivery framework to increase the proportion of users with access to good or very good play opportunities. The action plan also sets policies to promote accessible, safe, high quality, natural and adventurous play through a risk-benefit approach, management and targeted investment based on needs.

Several play investments plans have been regularly presented to the Culture and Communities Committee, stating the areas of investment and further developments.

Open Space Strategy 2021

City of Edinburgh Council's [Open Space Strategy 2021](#) (OPS) sets out the approach to protecting, managing and enhancing Edinburgh's network of open spaces over the period 2016-2021. It aimed to ensure that green and other spaces open to the skies are ready for climate change and continue to deliver social, environmental and recreational benefits for communities across the city. It builds on data in terms of quantity of different types of spaces such as residential amenity greenspace, play spaces for children and teenagers; green corridors; sports areas;

natural/semi-natural greenspace; allotments; churchyards and cemeteries; and civic space. The Open Space Strategy was informed by an Open Space Audit assessing over 800 open spaces. This strategy is currently being updated to support the next Local Development Plan.

The Open Space Strategy included an assessment of play sufficiency, and this current stand-alone Play Sufficiency Assessment has used the same methodology to assess quality (play value) and accessibility (distances to the playgrounds) to determine whether properties achieved the play standard outline in 2016. In addition, all formal areas were mapped. This Play Sufficiency Assessment therefore builds on the work previously undertaken.

Physical Activity and Sport Strategy for Edinburgh 2024-2034

The [Physical Activity and Sports Strategy for Edinburgh 2024-2034](#) recognises that children's right to play and be healthy is aligned with opportunities for physical activity. It also notices that the local environment such as streets, parks and public spaces in the neighbourhood have the potential to provide informal outdoor activity and play for residents of different ages. The strategy aims, along with other points, to focus on children and young people, raising the profile of outdoor spaces, such as blue and green spaces as places of free access for physical activity.

Sports Pitch Strategy for Edinburgh 2025 to 2035

Sports pitches are an important part of the city and contribute to the community's health and wellbeing, along with social cohesion. Edinburgh has a variety of sports pitches, and these are the cornerstone of many formal and informal recreational and social activities. The [Sports Pitch Strategy for Edinburgh 2025-2035](#) provides a framework for future development and management of the city's sports pitches to meet the needs of community and clubs. Its vision aims to have a sustainable and accessible network of pitches for the residents. It also recognises the importance of being accessible and inclusive, ensuring that a variety of people can use the pitches, including children and young people (page 20).

1.4. Requirements of the Play Sufficiency Assessment

The Play Sufficiency Assessment will provide an overview of the provision of play opportunities across the city, identifying where children and young people can play and relax, as well as some of the barriers that might prevent it. As per the [Scottish Government Planning Guidance: Play Sufficiency Assessment](#), the PSA report must have:

- Information on formal play spaces, presented both by locality and across the authority as a whole, with the location of all formal play spaces shown on a map.
- Information on informal play spaces within the planning authority area that have been identified as relevant by the planning authority and/or by children and young people. Mapping of informal play spaces is not required.
- Statements setting out the assessment of the sufficiency of play opportunities, considering quality, quantity and accessibility both at locality level as well as the planning authority area as a whole.

The guidance also refers to flexibility for planning authorities to include information that is relevant to the PSA as well as to other relevant pieces of work.

The distinction between formal and informal play spaces is based on the [Town and Country Planning \(Play Sufficiency Assessment\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2023](#) which defines 'formal areas of play' as 'spaces which are specifically designed and maintained for the purposes of play' (for example playgrounds - which are equipped play areas) and 'informal' as those open spaces that are not purposely intended to maintain play (for example woodlands, parks, some residential streets, among others).

The next section explores children's rights related to play, the definition of play, its value and benefits and types of play.

2. Play

“Play is not a luxury - it is a right. And it is essential for lifelong learning, health and resilience. (Lesley Miller, UNICEF representative)”¹

2.1. Children’s rights

Play is a fundamental and irreplaceable part of childhood. Children’s right to play is protected under Article 31 of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (UNCRC) adopted in 1989. The Article recognises that children and young people have the right to rest and leisure, to engage in age-appropriate play and recreational activities, as well as to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. Article 15 establishes that children and young people have the right to meet with friends and join groups.

In addition, Article 12 of the UNCRC states that children and young people need to be heard in matters affecting them, and their views should be given due weight in line with the age and maturity of the child.

[The General comment no.17](#) published by the United Nations in 2013 (CG17) clarifies the meaning and importance of Article 31 of the UNCRC. The GC17 emphasises the importance of Article 31 for children’s wellbeing and development. The comment highlights that many children face barriers to enjoy this Article – such as lack of and access to nature, exclusion from public spaces, poverty, unsafe environment, lack of recognition of the importance of play, academic pressure, overly programmed schedules, role of electronic media, among others. It places clear responsibility on government to respect, protect and fulfil the right to play.

¹ [UNICEF statement](#)

The United Nations Convention on the [Rights of the Child \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#) incorporated the UNCRC rights into domestic law. This step ensures that children’s rights become the central to the work of local authorities in delivering outcomes for children and young people in the communities.

2.2. Value and benefits of play

There is no single definition of play. This report adopts the definition by in the [Play Vision Statement and Action Plan 2025-2030](#) where play is understood as an activity that is freely led and chosen by the child. It is a core element of joy in childhood, and it is a fundamental block in supporting children’s physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual development.

A growing body of research and evidence support the idea that playing can contribute the children’s development and quality of life. The benefits of play are well examined²:

- **Health and wellbeing** - play is essential to children’s physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. It supports enjoyment, learning, creativity fine motor skills, exercise, language, contributing positively to overall health and wellbeing.
- **Early Childhood** - in early years, play supports brain development and the support of physical and mental skills. Playful interactions with parents and carers are linked to positive behavioural outcomes, while active play build co-ordination and strength.
- **Cognitive development** - play enhances language, concentration, memory, creativity and problem-solving. Outdoor and nature-based play further supports focus and self-regulation.
- **Physical Activity** – physical activity, through play, supports physical health and encouraging lifelong active habits.
- **Mental Health** - play supports emotional expression, stress management and self-esteem.
- **Emotional wellbeing** - through play, children explore emotions and relationships, helping to build resilience and confidence.

² [Play Scotland: The Power of Play](#)

- **Social development** - play supports friendship, cooperation and communication, helping children develop social skills and a sense of belonging.
- **Learning about risk and challenge** - play allows children to experience and manage risk safely.
- **Play as therapy** - play is used in care and health settings to support children's recovery, wellbeing and emotional health.

2.3. The importance of outdoor play

The benefits continue to exist when play takes place outdoors. Outdoor play is widely recognised as a vital component of children's healthy development and wellbeing. Research³ has shown strong links between regular visits to greenspaces in childhood and the willingness to visit these spaces independently in adulthood. In addition, the evidence also suggests that the physical and emotional benefits of greenspaces are closely linked to experiences in childhood.

Outdoor spaces also allow children to move more⁴ and engage in activities such as climbing, running, jumping, contributing to physical health and allows children to test their capabilities through challenging play. Furthermore, access to natural play environments can reduce anxiety and support children's mental health⁵.

2.4. Types of play

Generally, play can divide into five broad themes⁶:

- **Physical play** – active movement such as running, climbing and balancing that supports physical health and motor coordination

- **Play with objects** – exploring and manipulating materials or toys to develop problem solving, physical and cognitive skills, and sustain attention.
- **Symbolic play** – using language, symbols or images to express ideas, experiences, emotions and developing abstract thinking skills.
- **Pretence/socio-dramatic play** – acting out roles and scenarios to explore emotions, relationships and rules.
- **Games with rules** – playing structured games that help children learn about rules as well as social skills related to sharing, turn taking and fairness.

2.5. Play and inclusion

Every child and young people have the right to play regardless of their background, religion, culture, ability, gender, impairment, need or behaviour⁷.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)⁸, adopted in 2006, ensures that persons with disability must have all human rights. The Equality Act 2010⁹ places a duty on public bodies to anticipate and remove barriers that may disadvantage disabled children and young people. The Joint Children's Play Policy Forum and the UK Play Safety Forum¹⁰ highlight the importance of having quality play opportunities for all children. It advocates that reasonable adjustments must be made to ensure equity in access to play opportunities.

According to the UK Play Safety Forum and Children's Play Policy Forum¹¹:

"An Accessible Play Space is a space which is barrier-free, allows users access to move around the space and offers participation opportunities for a range of differing abilities. Not every child of every ability will be able to actively use everything within an accessible play space."

³ Ward Thompson, C., Aspinall, P. and Montarzino A. (2008) The childhood factor: Adult visits to green places and the significance of childhood experience. *Environment and Behaviour*; 40(1):111-43.

⁴ [The benefits of playing in nature, Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru/Natural Resources Wales](#)

⁵ [Play Scotland: The Power of Play](#)

⁶ [Whitebread, D., Basilio, M., Kuvalja, M. & Verma, M. \(2012\) The importance of play. Brussels: Toy Industries of Europe, 1-55](#)

⁷ [Play Wales: Play and Inclusion](#)

⁸ [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

⁹ [Equality Act 2010](#)

¹⁰ [Including Disabled Children in Play Provision](#)

¹¹ [Including Disabled Children in Play Provision](#)

“An Inclusive Play Space provides a barrier-free environment, with supporting infrastructure, which meets the wide and varying play needs of every child. Disabled children and non-disabled children will enjoy high levels of participation opportunities, equally rich in play value”

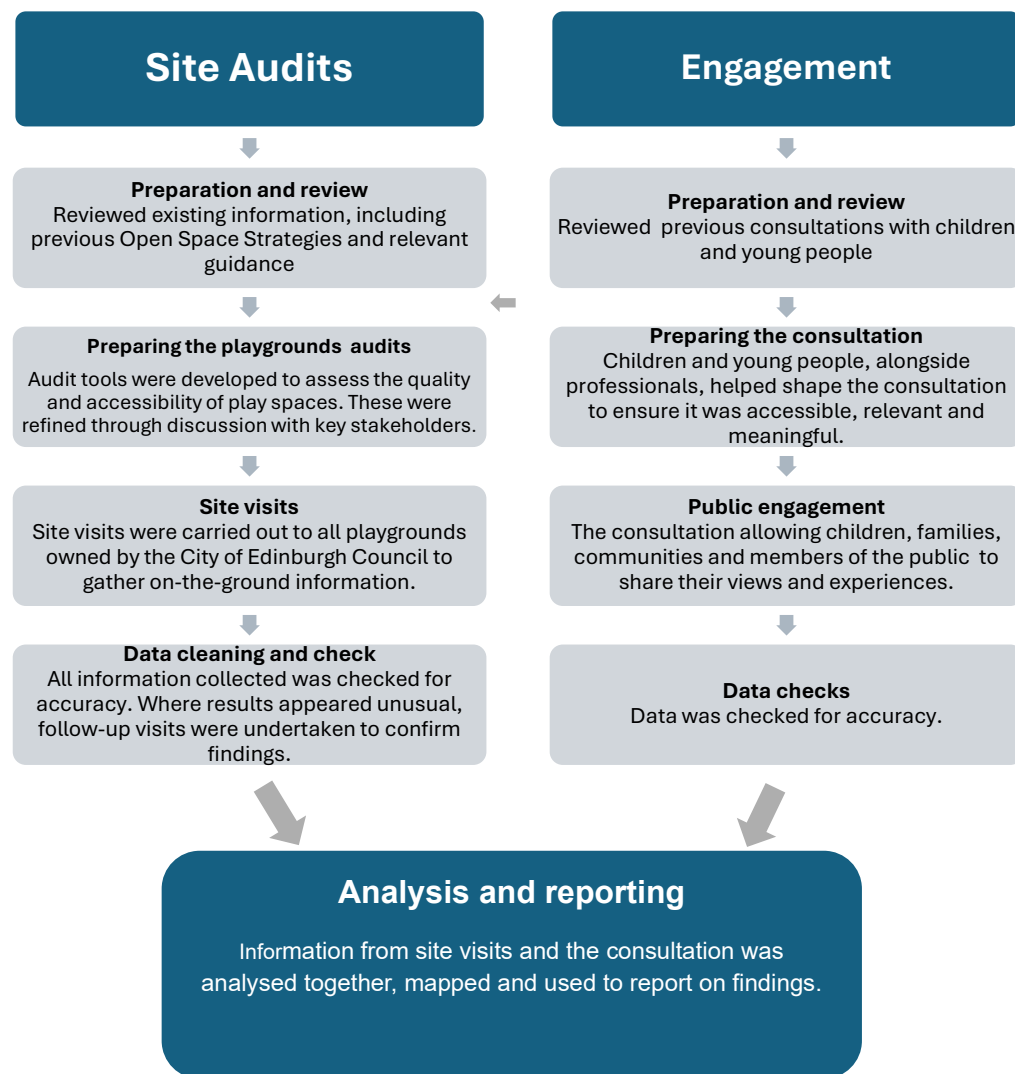
Inclusive and accessible play environments promote social integration and reduce the risk of isolation by enabling shared experiences between children of different abilities.

The next section of this report explores the methodology applied to conduct the play sufficiency assessment.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Framework

This section describes the mixed methods approach for this report. A mixed methods approach strengthens the methodology of the Play Sufficiency Assessment by combining quantitative data (such as audits, mapping, access measures) with qualitative evidence including children's voices as well parents and carers lived experiences, and stakeholders' insights. This approach provides a robust and balanced understanding of the play sufficiency, capturing not only where play opportunities are but also how they are lived, by whom and what barriers limit access. The use of these methods allows the PSA to meet the requirements stipulated by the regulations on how to conduct a PSA.



3.2. Assessing quantity and mapping

Formal outdoor play spaces

All the formal play spaces, such as the playgrounds as well as other sports pitches, ball areas, wheel areas, climbing, outdoor gym equipment exist in the Council's databases. All play equipment, inspections and maintenance issues are recorded and kept updated in the Council's asset management software.

Currently, the public can access an online map on the [Edinburgh Outdoors webpage](#) showing the locations with the playgrounds, as well as ball areas such as basketball hoops, kick pitches and Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs).

The Open Space Strategy (2012) mapped all the council owned playgrounds. This data, stored the Geographic Information System (GIS) software, was used as a basis to produce new updated maps.

A desktop exercise, followed by site visits took place to map some of the publicly accessible privately owned playgrounds, and in some cases MUGAs and wheel play spaces.

Informal outdoor play spaces

In addition to play spaces for children and teenagers (playgrounds, MUGAs, ball courts, wheel spaces, etc), the Open Space Strategy 2021 has mapped the following types of open spaces: residential amenity greenspace; natural/semi natural greenspaces; green corridors; allotments; churchyards and cemeteries; and sports areas. All maps and lists can be found in the [strategy](#) and [audit](#).

3.3. Assessing Quality

Audit of formal outdoor play spaces - playgrounds

The playgrounds were audited between May and September 2025, with some re-checks done in January and April 2026. All data was collected electronically. The

audits specifically looked at the quality of the formal areas of play (playgrounds) owned by the Council, as well as selected private playgrounds that are publicly accessible. The sites were audited during the day between 8am and 5pm. Weather conditions were varied during the different audits.

Previous open space strategies used the 'Play Value' to assess the quality of the playgrounds. The Play Value scores assess the quality of different play opportunities for different age groups, using the National Playing Fields Association PlaySafe 2000 system¹². To be able to compare the values of the current assessment with previous ones, the same scoring system was adopted in this audit (please see Appendix 2 – Audit tools).

The 'Play Value' describes the value that the play space brings to one's experience of play. It is an in-depth audit that looks at the range of play activities in the space to ensure children receive the right balance of risk and challenge to develop physical and social skills. It also encompasses the design, layout and safety within the area. The Play Value audit can be divided into three sections:

- Equipment and play opportunities
- Play co-operation, learning and social
- Site features

The scoring is based on the provision of play opportunities (e.g. balancing, sliding, rocking, spinning, climbing, gliding, climbing for different age groups: 0-6, 6-8, 8-14 years old), as well as site factors. The greater the range of play opportunities within each age group, the higher the scores. The overall scores can vary from:

- Good (51- 70)
- Very Good (71-100)
- Excellent (101 +)

Any play area scoring less than 50 is regarded as Fair (<50) and it does not contribute to the Play Space Access Standard.

It is important to recognise that some playgrounds may be assessed as Fair due to factors such as size or target age group. In some cases, the range and diversity of play opportunities may be more limited to an age group, which can influence the

¹² Play Value is based on the former National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) PlaySafe System. The NPFA became Fields in Trust in 2007

overall quality rating. In other cases, the physical size of a play space is also a determining factor in play value, as smaller sites may have restricted capacity to accommodate a broader mix of equipment that support different types of play and a wider range of age groups. This does not necessarily indicate poor provision but rather reflects the scale of the site and choice of play equipment within the wider play network.

Informal outdoor play spaces - public parks and gardens

City of Edinburgh Council assesses the quality of its parks on an annual basis since 2008 (except in 2020). The audits use the Green Flag Award field criteria, and the results are used to improve the quality of the parks. In 2025, 142 parks were assessed and the results can be found [here](#). This information was used to assess the quality of informal spaces, along with information from the engagement.

3.4. Assessing accessibility and inclusion

Accessibility to formal outdoor play spaces

The Open Space Strategy 2021 sets out the requirements to help meet the need for equipped play areas within the existing built environment. The Play Standard defined that all houses and flats should have access to at least one of the following:

- A play space of “Good” play value (51 – 70) within 800 metres walking distance
- A play space of “Very good” play value (71 – 100) within 1200 metres walking distance
- A play space of “Excellent” play value (101 +) within 2000 metres direct distance.

Access and inclusion - formal outdoor play spaces

The playgrounds’ accessibility and inclusivity were assessed using questions adapted from Play Scotland’s ‘Getting it Right for Play toolkit’¹³.

Accessibility to the playground was assessed by considering the provision of provision of wide, hard surface and flush access routes; accessible parking provision; and clearly marked and safe pathways to playground entrances.

Accessibility within the playground was assessed based on the provision of accessible routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites; hard-surfaces paths; clear wayfinding/accessible signage to enable navigation throughout the space; and provision of shelters or shaded areas.

The inclusivity the playgrounds was assessed based on the provision of at least two high value play opportunities (e.g. high-backed swings, wheelchair-accessible roundabouts, inclusive trampolines) suitable for users with mobility aids, alongside with inclusive infrastructure elements such as changing places toilets and quiet and/or enclosed spaces that can support children with sensory sensitivities.

In collaboration with stakeholders such as Edinburgh Access Panel, the importance of inclusive seating (furniture with arms and backs) was identified as an item to include. Parents of children with additional support needs (ASN) stressed the importance of presence of gates and fences to secure the space (the height of fences was considered in the audit). Together, these items provide an overview of whether the spaces are not only physically accessible but also inclusive.

Accessibility to informal outdoor play spaces

Accessibility to informal outdoor play spaces was mainly informed by the engagement findings, where residents were asked about the distance to and quality of access to their local greenspaces. In addition, City of Edinburgh Council’s Open Space Strategy mapped access to greenspaces using various

¹³ [Getting it Right for Play toolkit](#)

indicators, including the Local Greenspace Standard¹⁴ and Large Greenspace Standard¹⁵.

3.5. Analysis of the audits

The audit dataset was reviewed and cleaned to ensure accuracy and consistency, with checks undertaken to identify and correct outliers, anomalies and values that appeared inconsistent. In some cases, sites were reassessed to correct inconsistencies in the data.

In previous open space strategies, the reporting was done based on localities. However, in order to respond to the Place Profiles which, form part of the Evidence Report for City Plan 2040, the analysis has been changed to wards. In some cases, formal and informal areas of play may span across different wards. The formal areas of play have been analysed using the ward's boundaries on the Council's GIS database.

The distances to the formal areas of play were calculated using GIS software, using the parameters defined in the Play Standard of the Open Space Strategy 2021. The network analysis included the number of properties within the urban area.

3.6. Engagement

3.6.1. Children and young people

Listening to children's views on play is essential to understanding how play spaces are experienced and valued in practice. Children and young people have their own perspectives, which may differ from adult assumptions about what makes play meaningful, enjoyable or accessible. A rights-based approach, as required by the Play Sufficiency Assessment Regulations and grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), places a duty on public authorities to respect Article 12, which gives children the right to express their views on matters affecting

them, and Article 31, which protects their right to play. For this reason, engagement with children and young people was placed at the centre of this assessment.

To minimise consultation fatigue, engagement activities were coordinated with related work being undertaken for the Evidence Report for City Plan 2040, where appropriate.

Groups involved in the engagement

Engagement activities were designed to reach a wide and diverse range of children and young people, including:

- Early Years (ages 2/3–5)
- Primary school pupils (P1–P5, ages 5–9)
- Children and young people responding to an online survey (ages 10–18)
- Pupils in special needs schools
- Homeschooled children
- Participants in in-person engagement sessions
- Teenage girls
- Neurodiverse young people
- Young carers

Early Years (ages 3–5)

Teacher-supported activities were developed for children attending Early Years settings. These focused on play and were created in collaboration with Early Years practitioners. Alternative approaches were included to support non-verbal children. The activities were shared with all Early Years centres across Edinburgh.

¹⁴ All homes should be within 400 metres walking distance of a 'good' quality, accessible greenspace of at least 500 sq.meters.

¹⁵ All homes should be within 800m walking distance of an accessible large greenspace of at least 2 hectares.

Primary Schools (P1-P5, ages 5 to 10)

Teacher-led activities were delivered using the Play Needs Assessment¹⁶ designed by Play Scotland, a structured tool designed to explore children's outdoor play preferences, needs and the informal spaces that are important to them. The questionnaire was reviewed internally by Education colleagues, with minor amendments made and alternative formats developed, including visual-based and shorter versions, to increase accessibility. The activities were shared with all primary schools in Edinburgh, and each member of staff was able to choose the format that suited the class the most.

Children and young people (P6–S6, ages 10-18)

An online survey was developed for children and young people aged 10–18. Initial focus groups with secondary school pupils helped shape the content, language and approach, including how to encourage participation. A group of neurodiverse pupils also took part in the early stages, guiding the language and accessibility of the questions and topics around play.

The survey was developed in partnership with the Scottish Youth Action group and tested with children and young people aged 11–15. Questions covered play and places to “hang out”, alongside views on local areas, contributing to evidence for both the Play Sufficiency Assessment and City Plan 2040.

The survey was hosted on City of Edinburgh Council's Consultation Hub and promoted through schools, partner organisations, social media and posters in play spaces. An online format was chosen to enable easy access via school-issued devices or mobile devices. The questionnaire covered the following topics: home, moving around, shops and services, free time/play, outdoor spaces, climate change and nature, planning their local area.

Special Needs Schools

Engagement with pupils with additional support needs included differentiated activities, a site visit to a play space with a group of non-verbal pupils, and a focus

group with staff from ASN schools to capture professional insight into barriers and opportunities.

Homeschooled children

The questionnaire and engagement materials were also shared with home-educated children to ensure their views were included.

In-person engagement activities

Targeted in-person engagement sessions were delivered with the support of third-sector partners, including Lothian Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC). These sessions focused on play and places to spend time, with the Place Standard¹⁷ tool used to support discussion about local environments. Additional focus groups were also held within school settings. Please see Appendix 5 - Engagement details for full details of engagement.

Teenage girls

Evidence from research¹⁸ highlights that outdoor spaces can feel unsafe or unwelcoming for girls and may not meet their needs. Focus groups with teenage girls were, therefore, held to better understand their experiences and priorities, particularly in relation to spaces that are often perceived as male-dominated, such as multi-use games areas and skate facilities.

Neurodiverse young people

Focus groups with neurodiverse young people were undertaken to understand their experiences of play and social spaces, including barriers related to sensory environments, accessibility and inclusion.

¹⁶ [Play Needs Assessment – Getting it Right for Play](#)

¹⁷ [The Place Standard tool: A Version for Children booklet](#)

¹⁸ [Make Space for Girls](#)

Young carers

A focus group session with young carers took place to identify their lived experience of local spaces for play and recreation.

3.6.2. Members of the Public – What makes a good place?

In partnership with the Planning team leading on City Plan 2040, an online, place-based questionnaire was developed for members of the public. The survey explored a range of themes, including home and housing, local services, healthcare facilities, movement and connectivity, the economy, community life, green and natural spaces, growing spaces, climate change, sport and play.

The section relating to play included questions on:

- The importance of having a playground within walking distance.
- The importance of having a park or open space within walking distance.
- The importance of having sports facilities within walking distance.
- Satisfaction with the number of outdoor spaces available for children and young people in the local area.
- Positive aspects of local outdoor play spaces; and
- Areas for improvement within outdoor play spaces.

In addition to the on-line version, there were also in person drop-in events for those who are digitally excluded. This was an opportunity to chat about their local environment, including sharing their opinion on the play provision. Paper copies of the questionnaire were available and could be posted back using a freepost envelope.

The questionnaire was hosted on the Council's Consultation Hub for 12 weeks and promoted through partner organisations, Community Councils, social media, lamp post wraps, and posters in play spaces. In addition, the on-line questionnaire was directed to parent councils, seeking their support in the distribution.

3.6.3. Parents and carers

The public questionnaire included a dedicated section for parents and carers, allowing respondents to provide more detailed feedback on play provision. This section explored use of both informal and formal play spaces. It focused on types of space, frequency of use, access (distance in time), accessibility considerations (paths, ramps, crossings and general safety), perceptions of safety, quality and quantity of outdoor play spaces, quality of spaces supporting natural play, availability of playgrounds, positive aspects of playground provision, areas for improvement, and inclusiveness of play provision

An in-person workshop took place for parents of children with Additional Special Needs. This workshop focused on their views of the current provision for ASN children. The feedback also influenced the audit tool used to assess the playgrounds.

Two other focus groups took place at the Citadel, an organisation that supports the community in Leith. Participants were members of the Young Mums' support group.

The in-person events were also a great opportunity to speak to parents and carers.

3.6.4. Community Councils

A shorter questionnaire was created for Community Councils. The questionnaire focused on the quality, quantity and accessibility of both formal and informal spaces in their area, with space for comments. This was hosted on the Consultation Hub, and a link was sent to the Community Councils on City of Edinburgh Council's mailing list of Community Councils.

3.6.5. Analysis of the results

The questionnaire responses were analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. For closed questions, responses were counted and presented as frequencies and percentages to show overall patterns. For open-ended questions, a thematic approach was taken, where responses were reviewed and grouped into

common themes. Selected quotes were included to reflect participants' views in their own words.

The same thematic approach was taken when analysing the data from the engagement sessions.

3.6.6. Additional data

Over the summer of 2025, two Masters students from the Landscape and Wellbeing Master programme at University of Edinburgh, undertook their dissertation research in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council¹⁹, focusing on the themes of play and wellbeing. Each thesis explored distinct areas: one examined teenagers' use of parks; and the other one focused on children aged to 2-6, exploring parental attitudes towards play and risky play in playgrounds. All the case studies used playgrounds in Edinburgh.

¹⁹ All these were subject to Ethical approval by the University of Edinburgh, and none involved direct contact with children.

4. Quality, Quantity and Accessibility

4.1. Mapping

This section maps the distribution of playgrounds in the local authority and the respective Play Value. The mapping of other formal areas of play such as ball courts, wheel areas, climbing/sport and outdoor fitness gyms can be found in Appendix 4.

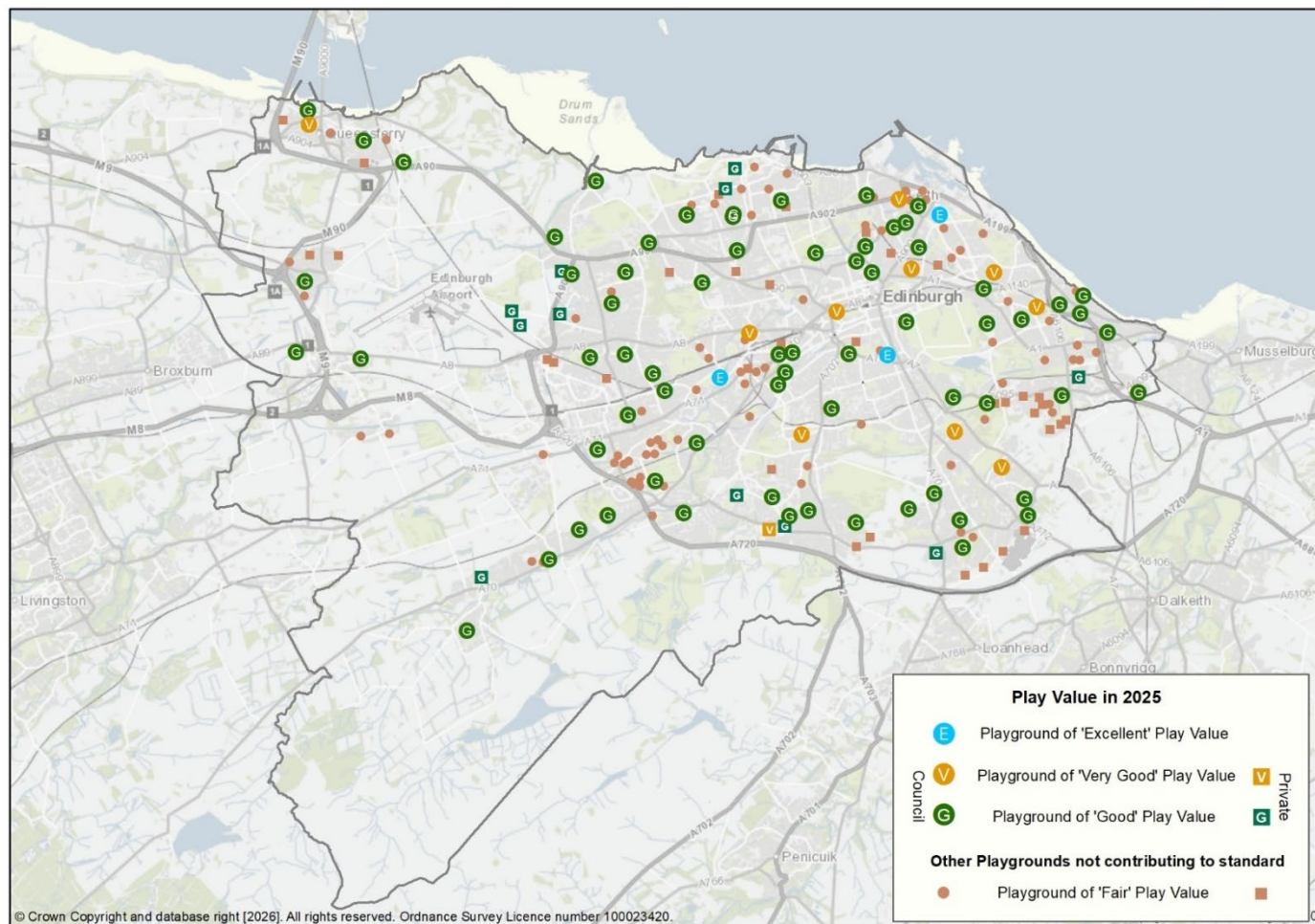


Figure 1- Map of the existing playgrounds and respective Play Value.

4.2. Local Authority

4.2.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

The audit identified 205 playgrounds in the local authority. Of these, 159²⁰ playgrounds are owned by City of Edinburgh Council (CEC).

A total of 46 publicly accessible, but privately owned playgrounds were also included in the analysis of play provision.

Table 1 – Number of formal outdoor play spaces across the local authority.

Type of play spaces	Number sites
Playgrounds	205
Ball courts (basketball/ MUGA/ Kick pitches)	40
Table tennis (locations)	6
Wheels	10
Climbing walls	2
Outdoor fitness gym	31
Trim trail	2

In addition to playgrounds, there are 91 other play spaces, mostly focused on sports. These include: 40 ball courts (areas for basketball, kick pitches, MUGAs); 6 locations with table tennis; 10 spaces for wheels (skateparks, tracks); 2 climbing walls; 2 trim trails; 31 outdoor fitness gyms.

In total, there are 296 spaces that contribute to formal areas of play in the local authority. While formal equipped playgrounds form the backbone of the provision, there are other spaces such as the ball courts spaces that extend the opportunity to support a more active and social play, particularly for older children. The provision of more specialist facilities such as climbing and wheeled sports (skate parks and pump tracks) remain limited in number.

²⁰ Some of the playgrounds have separate areas for different age groups, but in this case, due to their proximity they have all been included under one playground area.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

Edinburgh has a rich network of greenspaces that is essential for wildlife but can also offer play opportunities. Informal areas play can include open grass spaces, woodlands, parks, coastal areas, river corridors, and other unstructured environments. These spaces provide opportunities for spontaneous play and nature-based experiences that complement the formal areas of play.

The network of green and open spaces was mapped under the Open Space Strategy. In 2015, the total area of public parks and gardens was 591.38 ha.

In 2025 there were 142 parks that contributed to the network of greenspaces. Some of the parks have formal playgrounds, others offer sports opportunities, but they all offer the opportunity for informal play.



Figure 2 Children playing in informal outdoor space

Number of Pitches

According to the Sport Pitch Strategy, there are 253 sports pitches around the city.

Only 39 (15%) of the pitches are managed by the Council, while half of the pitches (126) are operated by Edinburgh Leisure (EL). There are 37 pitches (15%) within secondary schools which are managed by EL. Primary schools have 22 pitches (9%), but these are not accessible to the wider community. The remaining wider provision is managed by other partners and institutions.

The types of surface cover are varied: grass (highest number); 3G; 2G; water based astroturf; MUGA.

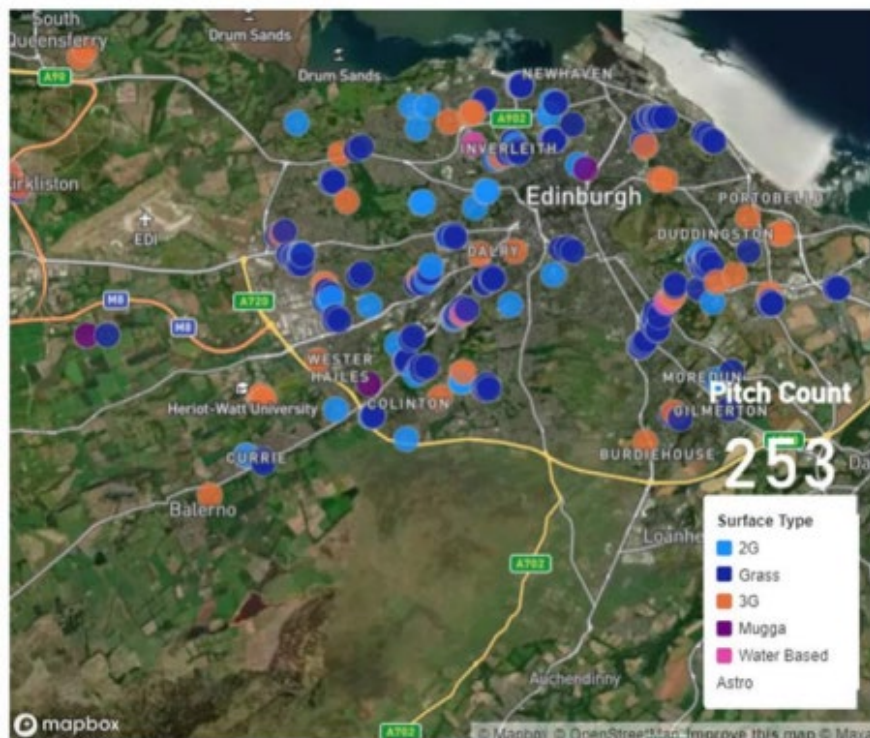


Figure 3 - Distribution of sports pitches in Edinburgh by surface type. Source: Sports Pitch Strategy for Edinburgh 2025-2035

Table 2- Number of pitches per sport. Source: Sports Pitch Strategy for Edinburgh 2025-2035

Type of sport	Number of pitches
Football	185
Rugby	41
Hockey	30
Cricket	22

The majority of pitches in Edinburgh accommodate football related activities. The second highest number of pitches can accommodate rugby, followed by hockey and cricket.

4.2.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play space – Play Value

Table 3- Quality of formal areas of play (playgrounds) in the local authority

Quality – Play Value	Number	%
Fair	112	55%
Good	79	39%
Very Good	11	5%
Excellent	3	1%

Overall, the quality assessment demonstrated that the majority of playgrounds were assessed as either Fair or Good. Of the total provision, 112 playgrounds (55%) were rated Fair, and 79 playgrounds (39%) were rated Good. A smaller proportion achieved higher quality ratings, with 11 playgrounds (5%) rated Very Good and 3 playgrounds (1%) rated Excellent.

This indicates that there is a split in quality, with less than half of the provision (45%) meeting at least a Good standard in terms of play value, and the other half of playgrounds remain within the Fair category. There is a very limited provision achieving Very Good or Excellent play value.

Play values for individual parks can be found in Appendix 3 – Audits. The majority of playgrounds are fenced, have signs at the gate, places to sit, some have bins outside the playground. Most do not have bushes/trees inside the space and are

often exposed with no shelter. Case studies of playgrounds of the different play values can be found in Appendix 1.

Some of the playgrounds have a 'tired' look and some of the older equipment may be perceived as unkept. All the Council's play areas have regular ongoing safety inspections and there are mechanisms to report broken equipment by members of the public. Equally, safety surfaces are regularly checked and replaced or mended if necessary, ensuring safety stays at the forefront.

Quality of informal outdoor play spaces

The network of green spaces across the local authority provides a wide range of informal outdoor play opportunities within diverse natural settings. The quality audit undertaken in 2025, found that the average citywide Parks Quality Assessment Score (PQAS) was 70% (Grade B). This indicates that, overall, the quality of parks across Edinburgh is good.

4.2.3. Accessibility

Access to formal areas of play

Table 4 – Play access standard – number of properties that have access to playgrounds with a specific play value

Play Values	Properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	27,808	11.0
Good and Very Good	11,567	4.0
Good and Excellent	30,011	11.0
Very Good and Excellent	19,862	8.0
Good only	73,484	28.0
Very Good only	15,878	6.0
Excellent only	36,785	14.0
Only served by Fair	48,924	19.0
Total number of properties	264,319	100

At local authority level:

- approximately **81%** of properties are within the accessibility thresholds of at least one playground with Good, Very Good or Excellent play value.
- approximately **19%** of properties are only served by playgrounds with a Fair play value

The analysis demonstrates that the majority of Edinburgh households have access to at least Good play value provision within the agreed thresholds. The high proportion of homes served by the access standard is due to the strategic distribution of Good, Very Good and Excellent standard playgrounds across the local authority, helping to address the gaps identified in previous assessments.

Furthermore, there is a gap in provision with nearly one fifth of properties primarily served by Fair-rated playgrounds only. However, the proportion of properties with access to only Fair playgrounds decreased from 24% to 19% since the 2015 audits.

Figure 4 illustrates the- comparison between the homes served and not play standard between 2015 and 2025. It highlights areas where homes that were previously outside the play standard in 2015 now meet the criteria. While access to Excellent provision remains limited, the addition of two new Excellent play value playgrounds at Leith Links and Saughton Park has increased the number of homes that have access to a higher quality play provision. On the map, the pink areas represent the homes that have gained access to playgrounds of at least a Good play value since 2015. Whereas the purple areas identify locations that continue to fall outside the play standard in 2025.

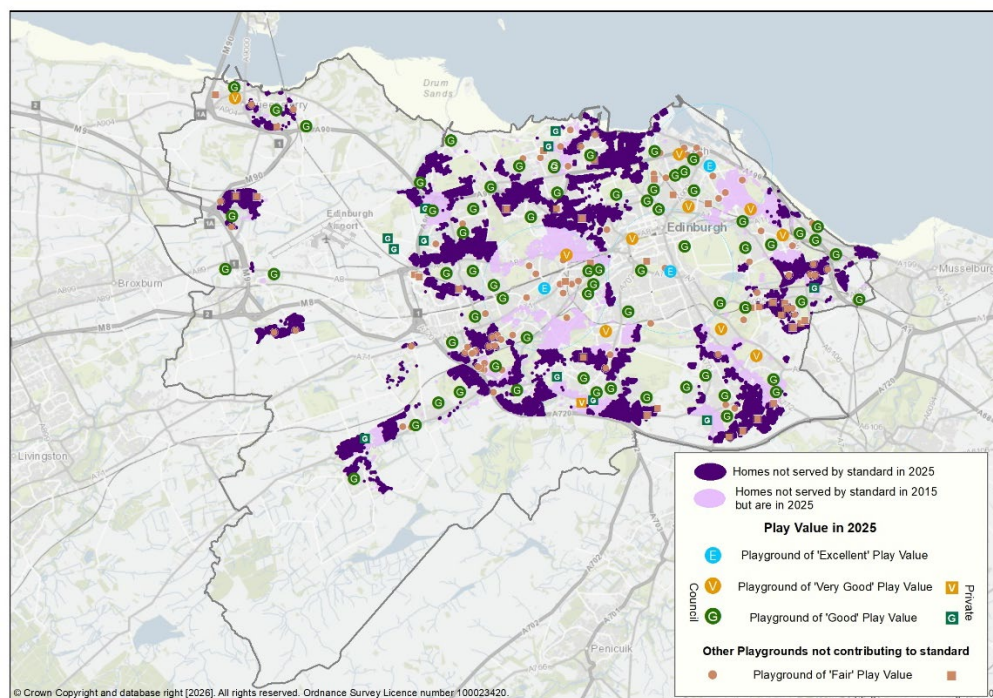


Figure 4 - Comparison between the homes served and not play standard in 2015 and 2025

Accessibility and inclusion

The audits identified significant gaps in inclusive provision across the local authority's formal play spaces. Only 11% of playgrounds had the flexibility to offer quiet or enclosed spaces to support children experiencing sensory sensitivity, while 89% did not provide these features. Provision of changing places toilets was extremely limited, with only 1% of playgrounds offering this facility. Similarly, only 4% of playgrounds provided at least two high-value play opportunities suitable for users with mobility aids, such as wide slides, accessible roundabouts or high-backed swings. Overall, the findings indicate that inclusive provision remains limited across the city and that there are substantial opportunities to improve accessibility and inclusion for disabled children and young people.

Overall, 84% of playgrounds provided at least some level of wide access routes to equipment and resting spaces, while 73% provided at least partial hard surface

access. However, none of the playgrounds provided accessible wayfinding or signage to support navigation through the space. Provision of accessible sheltered or shaded areas remained limited, with only 18% of playgrounds providing at least some level of accessible shelter/shaded area. These findings suggest that physical accessibility within playgrounds is relatively well established, although more inclusive design measures such as signage, orientation and sheltered provision remain limited across the local authority.

91% of playgrounds provided at least partial wide, hard surface and flush access routes into the play space. Around 8% of playgrounds provided at least some level of accessible parking suitable for vehicles with side or rear ramps, while 8% provided at least partial clearly marked and safe walkways between disabled parking bays and the playground entrance. These findings suggest that, while physical access into playgrounds is relatively robust in many playgrounds, accessible parking and safe connections remain significant gaps across the local authority area.

The majority of playgrounds are fenced; however, the fences have a lower height and may allow children to climb over them and escape the playground.

Many playgrounds have benches. Most of the Council owned benches in playgrounds are very similar in design. They tend to have a small arm support but have no backrest. In other cases, some may have backrests, but lack armrests. Therefore, there remains a gap in seating provision that supports inclusion and accessibility, with both arms and backrests.

Access of informal outdoor play spaces

According to the Open Space Strategy, in 2015, 89% of homes were served by the local greenspace standard and 79.3% of homes were served by the large greenspace standard. These figures suggest that the majority of homes across Edinburgh had a good accessibility to greenspace provision that may offer informal play opportunities.

4.3. Ward 1 – Almond

4.3.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

There are 23 playgrounds located within the Almond ward. This is a large ward that includes various settlements, including new residential developments. The distribution of the 23 playgrounds audited was: 6 in Queensferry, 5 in Kirkliston, 2 in Dalmeny, 1 in Ratho Station, 1 in Newbridge, 2 in Cramond, 2 in West Craigs (new development), 1 in Cammo Meadows, 1 in Davidson's Mains and 2 in Muirhouse.

Additionally, there are 6 other areas of play for games/sports: 4 court balls, 1 wheels play park, and 1 outdoor gym.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 20 parks in the Almond ward that are distributed between the different residential areas: King George V Park (Queensferry), Ratho Station Park, Haugh Park, Ferry Glen & Back Braes, Gypsy Brae Recreation Ground, Cramond Walled Garden, Silverknowes Park, Cramond Foreshore, Davidson's Mains Park, Pikes Pool Heritage Park, Muirhouse Millennium Linear Park, Station Road Park, Lauriston Castle, Allison Park, Inchcolm Park, Parkside, Newbridge, Ratho Station Flyover Park, Riverside Park. These are part of a rich network of green spaces across the ward, including coastal areas such as Cramond and Queensferry; local reserve - Cammo Estate; green corridors along the River Almond (River Almond Walkway), rural and agricultural lands, forests and woods.

4.3.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

In terms of quality (play value), the provision was predominantly rated as Good, with a small proportion of Very Good sites comprising only one site located in

Queensferry. Nearly 40% of the playgrounds had a rating of Fair and none achieved Excellent. The overall findings suggest gaps in provision.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment²¹ data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 66% (Grade C), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that the average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is moderate.

4.3.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Many properties (59.5%) only had access to playgrounds rated Good, while 8.3% of the properties had access to a combination of Good and Very Good provision. Only 4.3% of properties had access solely to Very Good playgrounds, and none had access to Excellent-rated provision. A further 28% of properties had access only to Fair-rated playgrounds

Overall, the ward demonstrates generally good access to Good-quality provision, although a proportion of households continue to rely on Fair-rated sites.

Inclusion and Accessibility

None of the playgrounds included quiet or enclosed sensory spaces, changing places toilets, or two or more high-value play opportunities for users with mobility aids. This suggests a very limited inclusive provision.

Overall, accessibility provision within playgrounds was moderate, with 74% of playgrounds provided at least some level of wide access routes and 52% provided hard surface access to all pieces of equipment and/or rest sites. However, inclusive supporting features remained limited: wayfinding or signage to support

²¹ Some parks may be located in two or more wards. Reporting by ward is done based on the best fit.

navigation through the space was absent in all playgrounds and only 9% of playgrounds providing at least some level of accessible shelter/shaded area.

Access arrangement into playgrounds was strong, with around 91% of playgrounds providing at least some level of wide and flush access routes into the play space. Approximately 17% included some level of accessible parking provision, but clear marked and safe walkways was limited.

4.4. Ward 2 – Pentland Hills

4.4.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

There are 25 playgrounds located within the Pentland Hills ward, representing one of the largest quantities of formal play provision across the city. However, this is also one of the largest wards in the local authority including different settlements such as Balerno, Currie, Juniper Green, Ratho within rural west Edinburgh. In addition, the ward includes 6 ball courts.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 10 parks in this ward, spread across different locations such as King George V Park (Currie), Muir Wood Park, Malleny Park, Curriemuirend Park, Blinkbonny Park, Marchbank Park, Ratho Park, Bloomiehall Park, Pentland View. Pentland Hills Regional Park is one of the main informal spaces, along with a variety of green and blue spaces, such reservoirs, agricultural land, woods and forests. Park As one of the rural wards, the mosaic of landscape is varied.

4.4.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

In terms of quality (play value), the provision is predominantly rated Fair (72%) and 28% achieved a good rating. None of the playgrounds assessed achieved a play value of Very Good or Excellent. This suggests that, although the ward benefits from a relatively high quantity of provision, the overall quality of formal areas of play opportunities is generally moderate. Lower play values are often associated

with smaller playgrounds that have a limited range of equipment and cater to a narrow age range, reducing the variety of play experiences available for different age groups.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 70% (Grade B), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is good.

4.4.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Over half, 56.1% of properties had access only to Good-rated playgrounds and the remaining 43.9% had access only to Fair-rated provision. No properties were identified as having access to Very Good or Excellent-rated playgrounds. The results suggest that access to higher-quality play provision within the ward is limited.

Inclusion and Accessibility

None of the playgrounds in this ward provided changing places toilets or two or more high-value play opportunities for users with mobility aids, and 92% lacked quiet or enclosed spaces that potentially could address sensory sensitivities. Overall, there are very low levels of inclusive provision.

Approximately 96% of playgrounds provided at least some level of wide access routes to playground equipment and resting areas, while 88% provided at least hard surface access. However, none of the playgrounds included accessible signage and only 20% provided some level of access to a shelter/shaded area. The results suggest a good level of accessibility provision in terms of paths and surfaces within playgrounds, however inclusive supporting features remained limited.

Approximately, 88% of playgrounds provided at least partial wide and flush access routes into the play space. However, level of accessible parking provision was relatively low (12%) and very low levels of safe walkways (4%). The results suggest a moderate level accessibility into the playgrounds, although supporting infrastructure for safe accessible parking remains limited.

4.5. Ward 3 – Drum Brae / Gyle

4.5.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 10 playgrounds located within the Drum Brae/Gyle ward. In addition, the ward includes 2 ball courts, 1 wheels play park, and 1 outdoor gym.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 6 parks in this ward, including Corstorphine Hill – a local nature reserve and a large park such as the Gyle Park.

4.5.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

Quality ratings were evenly split between Fair (50%) and Good (50%), with no playgrounds achieving either Very Good or Excellent status. The findings suggest that the ward has a moderate level of provision, with a balanced distribution between Fair and Good quality sites, although no higher-quality sites were identified.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 73% (Grade B), which is above the Edinburgh minimum

standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is good.

4.5.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

67.4% of properties had access only to Good-rated playgrounds, while 32.2% had access only to Fair-rated provision. A very small proportion of properties (0.4%, equivalent to 40 properties) had access only to Excellent-rated playgrounds. No properties had access to Very Good provision or combinations of higher-quality play values. Overall, the ward demonstrates a sufficient access to Good-quality provision, although higher-value play spaces remain limited.

Inclusion and Accessibility

None of the playgrounds included sensory spaces, changing places toilets or provision of two or more high-value play opportunities for users with mobility aids. This suggests a lack of inclusion provision.

All the playgrounds included wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites, and 90% provided hard surface access. None of the playgrounds included accessible wayfinding signage or access to a shelter/shaded area. The results suggest a strong accessibility provision in terms of paths and surfaces within playgrounds; however inclusive supporting features are lacking.

90% of playgrounds provided wide and flush access routes into the playground, while 20% included accessible parking. This suggests a strong access provision to the playgrounds.

4.6. Ward 4 – Forth

4.6.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 15 playgrounds located within the Forth ward. In addition, the ward includes 2 ball courts and 1 outdoor gym.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 5 parks in this ward. These parks, include large parks such as Victoria Park, West Pilton Park, Starbank and a network of green corridors. This ward also has a coastal front.

4.6.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

The majority of sites were assessed as Fair (60%), while 40% were rated Good. No playgrounds achieved either Very Good or Excellent ratings. The findings indicate that much of the provision would benefit from quality improvements to enhance overall play value.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 70% (Grade B), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is good.

4.6.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

The majority of properties (55.6%) had access only to Good-rated playgrounds, while 36.1% had access only to Fair-rated provision. Smaller proportions of households had access to combinations of higher-quality provision, including 5.6% with access to Good, Very Good and Excellent playgrounds. Very limited numbers

of properties had access exclusively to Excellent-rated provision. Overall, the ward demonstrates reasonable access to Good-quality play spaces, although over a third of households remains dependent on Fair-rated sites.

Inclusion and Accessibility

None of the playgrounds included sensory spaces or changing places toilets, and only 7% partly provided access to two or more high-value play opportunities for users with mobility aids. This suggests a limited inclusion provision.

80% of playgrounds included wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites and 73% provided hard surface access. Around 13% of playgrounds provided some level of access to a shelter/shaded area. None of the playgrounds included accessible wayfinding signage. The results suggest a good level of accessibility provision in terms of surfaces within the playground; however, inclusive supporting features remained limited.

Around 87% of playgrounds provided wide and flush access routes into the playground. However, no playgrounds included accessible parking or safe walkways. This suggests good access to the playgrounds for pedestrians, but lack of provision for accessible parking.

4.7. Ward 5 – Inverleith

4.7.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 10 playgrounds located within the Inverleith ward. In addition, the ward includes 4 ball courts, 2 locations with table tennis, 1 wheels play area. 1 climbing structure, 1 trim trail and 1 outdoor gym.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 8 parks in this ward, including paths along the Water of Leith, a destination park with Inverleith Park, local nature reserve and woodland area (Ravelston woods), amongst other smaller parks. The Royal Botanic Garden is also located within this ward.

4.7.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

Most playgrounds were rated Fair (60%), while 40% achieved a Good rating. No playgrounds were assessed as Very Good or Excellent. The results suggest that the ward has a moderate level of provision, although the predominance of Fair-rated sites highlights opportunities for further enhancement of provision.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 70% (Grade B), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is good.

4.7.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Nearly half (48.7%) of the properties had access to only Fair-rated playgrounds. In comparison, 41.8% of properties had access only to Good-rated provision. A smaller proportion of properties benefited from access to Very Good provision (7.9%) or combinations of higher-quality play values. Access to Excellent-rated provision was very limited. These findings suggest that a significant proportion of residents in the ward are served primarily by fair quality play value playgrounds.

Inclusion and Accessibility

10% of playgrounds included quiet or enclosed sensory spaces that potentially could address sensory, and 10% providing a changing place toilet. However, none of the playgrounds included two or more high-value accessible play opportunities suitable for mobility aid users. This suggests a mixed inclusive provision, with clear gaps in the provision of play equipment.

70% of playgrounds included wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites and further 70% partly provided hard surface access. Around 30% of playgrounds also provided some level of access to a shelter/shaded area. This suggests some relatively good accessibility outcomes in terms of paths and surfaces within the playground; however inclusive supporting features remained limited.

All playgrounds provided at least some level of wide and flush access routes into the play space. Around 30% included accessible parking and 20% included safe pedestrian walkways. These findings suggest a relatively good accessibility to the playgrounds.

4.8. Ward 6 – Corstorphine / Murrayfield

4.8.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 6 playgrounds located within the Corstorphine / Murrayfield ward. In addition, the ward includes 1 ball court and 1 location with table tennis.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 5 parks in this ward, including local parks such as Roseburn Park, St Margaret's Park, Balgreen Park, Union Park and Glendevon Park.

4.8.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

Half of the sites were assessed as Fair (50%), while 33% were rated Good and 17% achieved a Very Good rating. No playgrounds were rated Excellent. Overall, there is a split in quality.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 69% (Grade C), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is moderate.

4.8.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Only 16.5% of properties had access solely to Fair-rated playgrounds. A larger proportion of properties benefited from access to higher-quality provision, including 24.7% with access only to Good-rated playgrounds, 20% with access only to Excellent-rated provision, and 21.1% with access to both Very Good and Excellent playgrounds. A further 16.2% of properties had access to Good and Excellent provision. Overall, the ward demonstrates a good access to higher-quality play opportunities.

Inclusion and Accessibility

All playgrounds lacked sensory spaces, changing places toilets and access to two or more high value play opportunities suitable for mobility aid users. This demonstrates a gap in inclusive provision across this ward.

Around 84% of playgrounds provided at least some level of wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites, and hard surface access. In addition, 67% of playgrounds included at least some level of access to a shelter/shaded area. No accessible signage was identified. This indicates a good provision of accessibility within the playgrounds; however inclusive supporting features remained limited.

Approximately 84% of playgrounds providing at least partial wide and flush access routes into the playground. However, none of the playgrounds included accessible parking or safe walkways. Therefore, access to the playgrounds appears as a strength, but there is a lack of provision for accessible parking.

4.9. Ward 7 – Sighthill / Gorgie

4.9.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 16 playgrounds located within the Sighthill / Gorgie ward. In addition, the ward includes 4 ball courts, 2 wheels play areas and 2 outdoor gyms.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 9 parks in this ward, including Saughton Park, one of Edinburgh's flagship parks, Sighthill Park, Hailes Quarry Park, alongside a range of neighbourhood parks and green corridors.

4.9.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

The majority of sites were rated Fair (63%), while 31% achieved a Good rating. One playground (6%) was assessed as Excellent, although none achieved a Very Good rating. The ward, therefore, benefits from at least one high-quality destination playground; however, overall provision remains largely characterised by Fair-rated sites.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 73% (Grade B), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is good.

4.9.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Large proportions of properties benefited from access to higher-quality provision, including 42.1% with access to Good and Excellent playgrounds, 18.1% with access only to Good-rated playgrounds, and 27.7% with access only to Excellent-

rated provision. Only 5.2% of properties had access solely to Fair-rated. Overall, the ward demonstrates a good access to higher-quality play value opportunities.

Inclusion and Accessibility

Around 6% of playgrounds included changing places toilets and 13% provided access to two or more high-value play opportunities for users with mobility aids, and 13% offer the flexibility of providing quieter spaces to address sensory sensitivity. However, the majority of sites still lacked inclusive infrastructure.

Approximately 82% of playgrounds provided wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites and hard surface access. However, only 6% of playgrounds included accessible sheltered areas, and no sites provided accessible signage. Overall, accessibility within the parks is present; however inclusive supporting features remains limited.

Almost all the playgrounds (94%) included at least partial wide and flush access routes, while 13% included accessible parking and walkways. Therefore, access to the playgrounds appears as a strength, with scope for improvements in terms of accessible parking.

4.10. Ward 8 – Colinton / Fairmilehead

4.10.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 11 playgrounds located within the Colinton / Fairmilehead ward. In addition, the ward includes 2 ball courts.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 5 parks in this ward, including local parks such as Campbell Park, Spylaw Park, Fairmilehead Park, Colinton Mains Park and Redford Wood. In addition, the Regional Pentland Hills Park is also located in this ward, along with other blue and greenspaces such as reservoirs, and woodlands.

4.10.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

In this ward 64% of playgrounds rated Good and 9% assessed as Very Good. Only 27% of sites were rated Fair and none achieved Excellent status. Overall, the ward demonstrates a good standard of formal play provision.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 72% (Grade B), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is good.

4.10.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

38.8% of properties had access only to Good-rated playgrounds, while 30.3% had access only to Fair-rated provision. A further 27.7% of properties benefited from access to both Good and Very Good provision. Only a small proportion of households had access solely to Very Good-rated playgrounds, and no properties had access to Excellent-rated provision. Overall, access to Good or higher play values opportunities is good; however, one third of properties only have access to playgrounds with a Fair play value.

Inclusion and Accessibility

None of the playgrounds included changing places toilets or access to two or more high-value play opportunities for users with mobility aids, although 9% partly provided quiet/enclosed spaces with potential to address sensory-sensitivity. Overall, the findings demonstrate limited inclusion provision.

Around 82% of playgrounds included wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites and 64% provided hard surface access. None of playgrounds

included accessible signage or sheltered areas. Overall accessibility within the playground is good; however inclusive supporting features remained limited.

Within this ward, 91% of playgrounds including at least some level of wide and flush access routes; however, none of playgrounds included accessible parking or safe walkways. Overall, access to the playgrounds appears as a strength, with scope for improvements in terms of accessible parking.

4.11. Ward 9 – Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart

4.11.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 5 playgrounds located within the Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart ward. In addition, the ward includes 1 trim trail and 1 outdoor gym.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 7 parks in this ward, including Easter Craiglockhart Hill Local Nature Reserve, Dovecot Park, Harrison Park, Fountainbridge Green, Meadowspot Park and Paties Road Recreation Ground.

4.11.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

More than half (60%) of the playgrounds were rated Fair and 40% were assessed as Good. None of the playgrounds achieved either Very Good or Excellent ratings. The findings suggest fair provision overall, with scope for improvements to the play quality.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 74% (Grade B), which is above the Edinburgh minimum

standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is good.

4.11.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Around 38.8% of properties had access only to Good-rated playgrounds, while 30.3% had access only to Fair-rated provision. Approximately 27.7% of properties benefited from access to both Good and Very Good-rated playgrounds. Access to Excellent-rated provision was not identified within the ward. Overall, access to Good or higher play values opportunities is good; however, one third of properties only have access to playgrounds with a Fair play value.

Inclusion and Accessibility

Ward 9 did not contain any playgrounds with identified sensory spaces or changing places toilets. One playground partly provided accessible high-value play opportunities for users with mobility aids. This indicates a gap in inclusive provision.

All playgrounds provided both wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites and hard surface access. Around 40% also provided some level of access to sheltered or shaded areas. However, none of the playgrounds included accessible signage. Overall accessibility within the playground is good; however inclusive supporting features remained limited.

All playgrounds included at least partial wide and flush access routes into the play space. No accessible parking or safe pedestrian walkways were identified. Overall, access to the playgrounds is a strength, with scope for improvements in terms of accessible parking.

4.12. Ward 10 – Morningside

4.12.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 6 playgrounds located within the Morningside ward. In addition, the ward includes 3 outdoor gyms.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 5 parks in this ward, including more natural areas such as Hermitage of Braid Local Nature Reserve, Braidburn Valley Park, Braid Hills, to more urban parks such as The Meadows²² and Bruntsfield Links, and Morningside Park. The Meadows is one of the largest parks in Edinburgh and it is heavily used, being a destination park.

4.12.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

Within this ward, 50% of the playgrounds were rated Fair and 33% were assessed as Good, and 17% were rated as Very Good. None of the playgrounds achieved Excellent ratings. The findings suggest a good provision overall, with scope for improvements to quality.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 80% (Grade A), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is very good.

4.12.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Only 7.1% of properties had access solely to Fair-rated playgrounds. In contrast, 37% of properties had access to both Good and Excellent provision, while 20% had access only to Very Good-rated playgrounds and 18.3% had access only to Excellent-rated playgrounds. These findings suggest that a large proportion of properties benefit from access to higher-quality play opportunities.

Inclusion and Accessibility

Around 33% of playgrounds included quiet or enclosed sensory spaces that potentially could address sensory and 17% provided access two or more high-value play opportunities for users with mobility aids. However, none of the playgrounds included a changing places toilet.

Around 67% of playgrounds provided at least partly wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites and hard surface access. Many of the playgrounds (67%) also included access to sheltered or shaded areas that had the potential to address sensory sensitivity. However, none of the playgrounds had accessible signage/wayfinding. Overall, the accessibility within the playgrounds is good.

Approximately 83% of playgrounds included wide and flush access routes into the play space. However, no accessible parking or safe walkways were identified. Overall, access to the playgrounds appears is a strength, with scope for improvements in terms of accessible parking.

4.13. Ward 11 – City Centre

4.13.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 4 playgrounds located within the City Centre ward. In addition, the ward includes 6 outdoor gyms, 1 ball court and 1 wheels play area.

²² The Meadows and Bruntsfield Links is located across three wards: City Centre (Ward 11); Southside / Newington (Ward 15) and Morningside (Ward 10)

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 12 parks in this ward, with a wide variety of spaces. These include from the well-known historical greenspaces such as Princes Street Gardens and Calton Hill to smaller urban gardens such as Barony Community Garden or Dunbar's Close Garden.

4.13.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

Within this ward 50% of playgrounds rated Good and 25% assessed as Very Good. Only 25% of sites were rated Fair, and none achieved Excellent status. The findings suggest that, while formal play provision generally presents a high play value.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 71% (Grade B), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is good.

4.13.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Only 1.5% of properties had access solely to Fair-rated provision. Many properties had access to combinations of higher-quality playgrounds, including 24% with access to Very Good and Excellent provision and 23.7% with access to Good and Excellent provision. A further 21.6% of properties had access to Good, Very Good and Excellent-rated playgrounds. These findings indicate that properties in the City Centre generally benefit from very good access to higher-value play provision.

Inclusion and Accessibility

Around 25% of playgrounds included quiet or enclosed sensory spaces that potentially could address sensory and 25% provided accessible high-value play opportunities for users with mobility aids. However, none of the playgrounds included access to a changing places toilet. These findings suggest some inclusive infrastructure in the ward.

All playgrounds included wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites and hard surface access, while 50% provided access to sheltered or shaded areas. However, no accessible signage was identified within playgrounds. Overall, the accessibility within the playgrounds is good.

All playgrounds provided wide and flush access routes into the play space. Around 25% also included some level of accessible parking and safe walkways. Overall, the accessibility to the playgrounds is strong, with some accessible parking.

4.14. Ward 12 – Leith Walk

4.14.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 10 playgrounds located within the Leith Walk ward. In addition, the ward includes 2 ball courts.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 7 parks in this ward. These include a majority of urban parks such as Hopetoun Crescent Gardens, Montgomery Street Park, Pilrig Park, Hillside Crescent Garden, Redbraes Park, Dalmeny Street Park and Keddie Park, in addition to the green network of spaces such as green corridors along the Water of Leith.

4.14.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

The ratings were evenly distributed between Fair and Good, each accounting for 40% of sites, while 20% of playgrounds achieved a Very Good rating. None of the playgrounds were assessed as Excellent. Overall, the ward demonstrates some high play value; however nearly half of the playgrounds offer a lower play quality provision.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 69% (Grade C), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is moderate.

4.14.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Although the ward has playgrounds with a Fair play value, no properties were identified as having access solely to Fair-rated playgrounds. The majority of properties (64.7%) had access to Good, Very Good and Excellent-rated provision, while 15.7% had access to both Very Good and Excellent provision and 14% had access to Good and Excellent provision. These findings suggest that the vast majority of properties within the ward have access a wide range of good quality play opportunities.

Inclusion and Accessibility

Only 10% of playgrounds included quiet or enclosed sensory spaces that potentially could address sensory sensitivities and 10% provided access to at least two high-value play opportunities for users with mobility aids. No changing places toilets were identified. Although there is some provision available, the findings suggest a gap in inclusive provision.

All the playgrounds included at least some level of wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites and 80% providing hard surface access. Around 10% of playgrounds included access to sheltered or shaded areas. Accessible signage/wayfinding was absent across all sites. The findings suggest a good provision within the playgrounds with scope for adding more inclusive features.

All playgrounds included at least partial wide and flush access routes. None of the playgrounds included accessible parking or safe walkways. This suggests the pedestrian access to the spaces is good; however, there is a gap in provision for accessible parking.

4.15. Ward 13 – Leith

4.15.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 8 playgrounds located within the Leith ward. In addition, the ward includes 3 ball courts and 1 outdoor gym.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 3 parks in this ward. These include a majority of urban parks such as Taylor Gardens and Henderson Gardens, including a large destination park – Leith Links, in addition to the green network of spaces such as green corridors along the Water of Leith. This ward also faces the Firth of Forth and has some coastal areas.

4.15.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

The majority of sites were assessed as Fair (75%). Only 13% were rated Good, while 13% achieved an Excellent rating. None of the playgrounds were rated Very Good. This suggests a mixed quality profile, where one high-quality site contrasts with a wider network of spaces offering less play value.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 69% (Grade C), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is moderate.

4.15.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Around 43.8% of properties had access to Good, Very Good and Excellent-rated playgrounds, while 30.8% had access only to Excellent-rated provision. Only 7.8% of properties had access solely to Fair-rated playgrounds. Overall, the ward demonstrates a good access to high value play opportunities due to Leith Links' high play values despite the lower play value of the remaining individual playgrounds.

Inclusion and Accessibility

Only 13% of playgrounds (Leith Links) provided changing places toilets, access to at least two high value play opportunities for users with mobility aids and partly included quiet or enclosed sensory spaces that potentially could address sensory sensitivity. However, most playgrounds continued to lack inclusive features. Overall, the findings highlight a gap in inclusive provision across the ward.

Around 76% of playgrounds provided wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites, while 63% included hard surface access. Approximately 26% included access to sheltered or shaded areas, and no accessible signage was identified. The findings suggest moderate accessibility outcomes, particularly in relation to routes and surfaces; however, supporting inclusive infrastructure remains limited.

Around 88% of playgrounds included wide and flush access routes. No accessible parking or safe walkways were identified. This suggests the pedestrian access to

the spaces is good, although gaps remain in supporting accessible parking provision.

4.16. Ward 14 – Craigentinny / Duddingston

4.16.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 9 playgrounds located within the Craigentinny / Duddingston ward. In addition, the ward includes 1 ball court and 1 wheels play area²³.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 6 parks in this ward, which include a majority of urban parks such as Figgate Burn Park, Baronscourt Park, Seafield Recreation Ground, Lochend Park, Meadowfield Park and Meadows Yard Local Nature Reserve. Holyrood Park, located in this ward, is characterised by the wildness and hosts one of the most iconic landscapes in Edinburgh – Arthur's Seat. Other spaces in the ward include coastal areas.

4.16.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

Approximately 44% of the playgrounds were rated Fair, 33% were assessed as Good and 22% achieved a Very Good rating. None of the playgrounds were rated Excellent. The ward demonstrates a relatively mixed quality profile, with nearly half of the playgrounds falling within the Fair category, demonstrating gaps in the provision of higher quality play opportunities.

²³ Located in Figgate Park, which spans across two wards (Ward 14 and Ward 17)

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 69% (Grade C), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is moderate.

4.16.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Within this ward, many properties benefited from combinations of higher-quality provision. Approximately 33.9% of properties had access to both Very Good and Excellent-rated playgrounds, 13.9% had access to Excellent only playgrounds, while 22% had access to Good and Very Good provision. Only 2.1% of properties had access solely to Fair-rated playgrounds. The findings suggest a varied access to high quality play opportunities, despite 4 of the 9 playgrounds offering a Fair play value provision.

Inclusion and Accessibility

None of the playgrounds provided changing places toilets. Only 11% of playgrounds provided access to at least two high value play opportunities for users with mobility aids and partly included quiet or enclosed sensory spaces that potentially could address sensory sensitivity. The findings suggest limited inclusive provision.

Around 78% of playgrounds provided wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites, while 55% included hard surface access. Only 11% included access to sheltered or shaded areas, and no accessible signage was identified. The findings suggest moderate accessibility outcomes, particularly in relation routes and surfaces; however, supporting inclusive infrastructure remains limited.

Within the ward, 77% of playgrounds included at least some level of wide and flush access routes. No accessible parking or safe walkways were identified. This suggests the pedestrian access to the spaces is good, although gaps remain in supporting accessible parking provision.

4.17. Ward 15 – Southside / Newington

4.17.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 5 playgrounds located within the Southside / Newington ward. In addition, the ward includes 1 ball court, 3 locations with table tennis, and 6 outdoor gyms.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 8 parks in this ward, which include a majority of urban parks, such as Prestonfield Park, Deaconess, Morgan Playing Fields, Bauks View, St Patrick Square, Nicolson Square, Prestonfield War Memorial and a larger scale greenspace - Inch Park. The Meadows and Bruntsfield Links Park are also part of this ward, being a destination park.

4.17.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

The ward demonstrated a varied quality profile, with 40% of playgrounds rated Fair, 20% rated Good, 20% assessed as Very Good and 20% achieving Excellent status. Although the ward has some high-quality play spaces, the findings highlight a mixed quality network, with gaps remaining in the provision of consistently high-quality play opportunities.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 72% (Grade C), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is good.

4.17.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

The majority of properties (77%) had access only to Excellent-rated playgrounds. Only 0.8% of properties had access solely to Fair-rated provision. Additional households also benefited from combinations of Good and Excellent-rated playgrounds. Overall, the findings suggest generally good access to high quality play provision within the ward.

Inclusion and Accessibility

While no playgrounds included nearby changing places toilets²⁴, 20% provided access to at least two high value play opportunities for users with mobility aids, and 60% partly provided quiet or enclosed spaces to address sensory sensitivity. This suggests that although some playgrounds provide inclusive equipment and quieter spaces, there is still a gap in overall inclusive provision.

Around 60% of playgrounds partly provided wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest sites, while 60% partly included hard surface access. 60% provided or partly provided access to sheltered or shaded areas, and none had accessible signage²⁵. The findings suggest moderate accessibility outcomes, particularly in relation routes and surfaces; however, supporting inclusive infrastructure remains limited.

All playgrounds provided at least some level of wide and flush access routes into the play space. Around 40% included some level of accessible parking provision, although no playgrounds included safe walkways between parking and entrances. This suggests the pedestrian access to the spaces is good, although gaps remain in supporting accessible parking provision.

²⁴ The changing places toilet in the Meadows is located approx. 500m away from the Meadows Active Area playground.

²⁵ Prestonfield playground has a communication panel.

4.18. Ward 16 – Liberton / Gilmerton

4.18.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 15 playgrounds located within the Liberton/Gilmerton ward. In addition, the ward includes 2 ball courts and 7 outdoor gyms²⁶.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 10 parks in this ward, such as Liberton Park, Moredun Park, Fernieside Recreation Ground, Mortonhall Community Park, Seven Acre Park, Gracemount Community Park, Drum Park, St Katharine's Park, Ferniehill Community Park and Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park, a local nature reserve. Along the edge of the city boundary, the ward also benefits from a mosaic of agricultural and natural areas.

4.18.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

Quality ratings were evenly split between Fair and Good, each accounting for 47% of sites, while 7% achieved a Very Good rating. None of the playgrounds were assessed as Excellent. The findings indicate a relatively balanced provision profile, although there remains scope to increase the number of higher-quality play spaces.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 69% (Grade C), which is above the Edinburgh minimum

²⁶ Burdiehouse Wheels Area is located in this ward; however, no equipment was present at the time of the audits. Therefore, it was not included.

standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is moderate.

4.18.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Around 42.4% of properties had access only to Good-rated playgrounds, while 29% had access solely to Fair-rated provision. A further 25.2% of households benefited from access only to Very Good-rated provision. No properties were identified as having access to Excellent-rated playgrounds. Overall, the findings suggest a mixed access profile.

Inclusion and Accessibility

Within the ward, none of the playgrounds had changing places toilets. Only 7% partly offered quiet/enclosed spaces that offered the possibility to address sensory sensitivity. 13% of the spaces partly provided access to at least two high value play opportunities for users with mobility aids. This highlights a significant gap in inclusive provision.

Around 93% of playgrounds partly provided wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest places, while 53% partly included hard surface access. None of the playgrounds provided access to sheltered or shaded area or signage. The findings suggest moderate accessibility outcomes, particularly in relation routes and surfaces; however, supporting inclusive infrastructure remains limited.

Around 94% of playgrounds provided at least some level of wide and flush access routes into the play space. No accessible parking or safe walkways were identified. This suggests the pedestrian access to the spaces is good, although gaps remain in supporting parking provision.

4.19. Ward 17 – Portobello / Craigmillar

4.19.1. Quantity of spaces

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

In total, there are 27 playgrounds located within the Portobello / Craigmillar ward. In addition, the ward includes 5 ball courts, 3 wheel areas, 1 climbing wall and 1 outdoor gym.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

There are 16 parks in this ward. There is variety of spaces, from coastal areas such as Portobello beach, woodland, green corridors and parks such Straiton Place Park, Little France Park, Hays Park, Brighton Park, Magdalene Glen, Craigmillar Castle Park (including Hawkhill Woods), Cairntows Park, Rosefield Park, Jewel Park, Brunstane Mill, Newcraighall Park, Bingham Park, Abercorn Park, Portobello Community Garden, Hunter's Hall Park (Jack Kane Centre) and Joppa Quarry Park.

4.19.2. Quality of spaces

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

The majority of playgrounds were rated Fair (70%), while 30% achieved a Good rating. None of playgrounds were assessed as either Very Good or Excellent. The findings suggest a generally fair quality profile across the ward, with limited provision of higher quality play opportunities.

Quality of informal areas of play

According to the Parks Quality Assessment data from 2025, the average quality of the parks in this ward was 68% (Grade C), which is above the Edinburgh minimum standards of 60%. This indicates that average quality of parks within the network of informal play spaces is moderate.

4.19.3. Accessibility

Access (distance) to formal areas of play

Around 53.4% of properties had access only to Good-rated playgrounds, while 39.1% had access solely to Fair-rated provision. Only small proportions of households had access to Very Good provision, and no properties were identified as having access to Excellent-rated playgrounds. The findings suggest that, while some properties have access to Good-rated provision, access to higher-quality play opportunities remains limited.

Inclusion and Accessibility

Only 4% of playgrounds provided access to at least two high value play opportunities for users with mobility aids, while 1 playground provided access to only one high backed swing. 7% partly included access a quiet/enclosed spaces that offered the flexibility to address sensory sensitivity and none had access to changing places toilets. This suggests that, although some playgrounds provide accessible play, the overall inclusive provision remains low.

Around 81% of playgrounds partly provided wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/rest places, while 78% partly included hard surface access. 18% of playgrounds included access to sheltered or shaded area. However, no accessible signage was identified. The findings suggest moderate accessibility outcomes, particularly in relation routes and surfaces; however, supporting inclusive infrastructure remains limited.

Around 93% of playgrounds provided at least some level of wide and flush access routes into the play space. No accessible parking for vehicles with side and rear ramps was identified, however, 15% of the playgrounds partly had safe walkways identified. This suggests the pedestrian access to the spaces is good, although gaps remain in supporting accessible parking provision.

5. Engagement

5.1. Introduction

This presents the results from the engagement with children, young people, parents and carers and members of the community. The section is divided into:

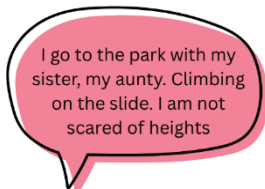
- Early Years
- Primary 1 to Primary 5 (P1 to P5 pupils)
- Primary 6 and Primary 7 (P6 and P7 pupils)
- Teenagers (S1 to S6 pupils)
- Additional Support Needs
- Parents and carers
- Public
- Community Councils
- Focus groups

5.2. Children in Early Years

The following themes emerged from the engagement with children in Early Years settings aged 3–5 years old. For more details, please see Appendix 6 – Engagement results

Who takes children to play?

A strong theme throughout the responses was the importance of family relationships and shared experiences. Most children described visiting parks and outdoor spaces with parents, grandparents, siblings or wider family members.



Where children go to play

Children identified a wide variety of places where they play including parks, beaches, forests, gardens, school grounds and indoor leisure environments. Some children were able to name the parks they usually visit, such as destination parks (e.g. Princes Street Gardens, Leith Links, Saughton Park, Meadows, Victoria Park, Inverleith) and natural heritage sites (Pentland Hills Regional Park) to local parks (e.g. Harrison Park, Pilrig Park, Colinton Mains Park, Figgate Park and Seven Acre Park).



The findings highlight that younger children experience play across a broad network of formal, informal, indoor and outdoor environments.

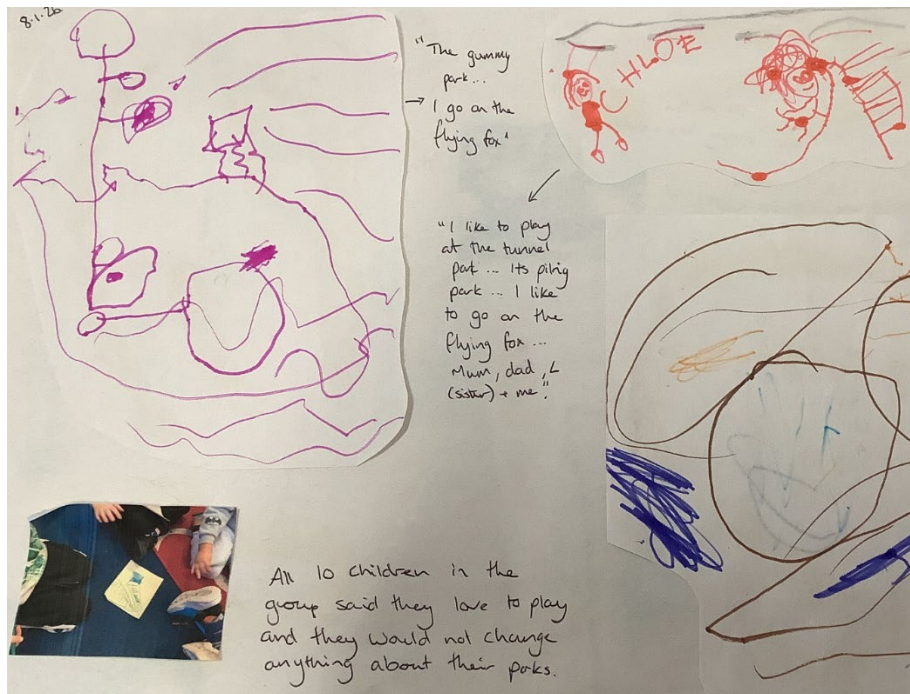


Figure 5 – Drawing illustrating the consultation with children in Early Years.

Types of playing

Children described challenge, movement, imagination, social interaction and sensory experiences as an important part of 'good' play.

Physical activities/active play such as football, swimming, skateboarding and riding bikes/scooters were also described. Some other activities included throwing/kicking balls, running and jumping. Some mentioned scoring goals as their favourite part of sport activities, which adds a note of competition, achieving process and following rules.

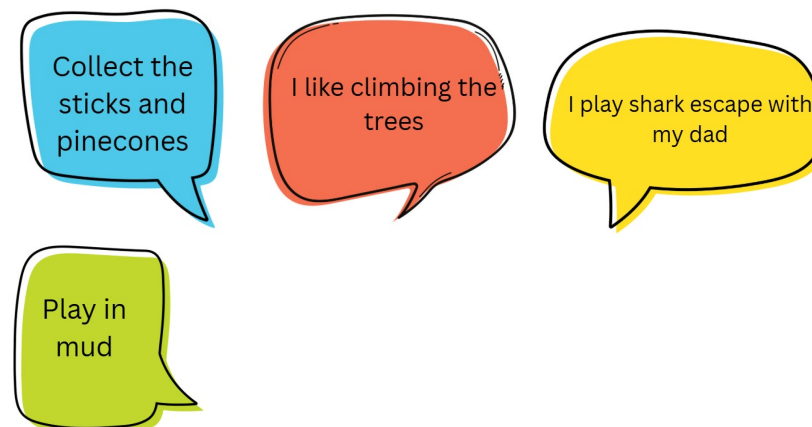
Nature-based play and adventurous play featured greatly throughout the engagement. For example, there were mentions of walking in the woods/forests, climbing trees, playing with sticks, mud and other natural elements, going to the zoo or playing with snails as children's favourite kinds of activities.



Figure 6 – Drawing illustrating the consultation with children in Early Years.

Another type of activities is imaginative play. For example, role play such as playing Spiderman, Gingerbread Man, or rescuing someone in danger.

Constructive play such as making models of houses and castles and building towers, drawing outside, building sandcastles also feature in the types of play.



Play equipment and features children enjoy

Certain types of play equipment were mentioned repeatedly across settings. Children enjoyed equipment that supports movement, challenge, speed, balance and sensory experiences such as monkey bars, climbing frames, slides, roundabouts, swings.

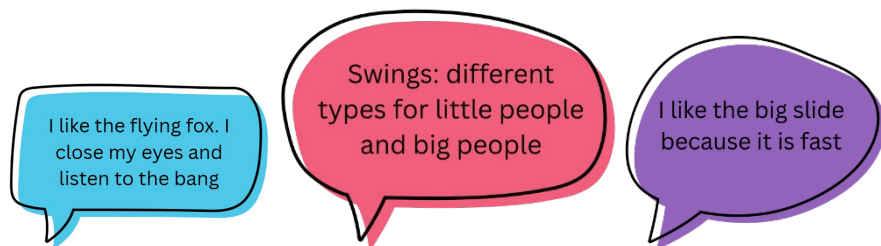


Figure 7 – Drawing illustrating the consultation with children in Early Years.

What children do not like

Children identified several barriers linked to outdoor play. These included poor weather condition, dog fouling and cleanliness, broken equipment. Some children also expressed fears linked to challenge and risk, although adventurous play remained highly valued overall.



Summary

The findings demonstrate that play is highly valued by children aged 3–5 and forms an important part of their everyday experiences. Children described enjoying a wide variety of play experiences including but not limited to active play, adventurous play, imaginative play, constructive play and nature-based play. Parks, playgrounds, forests, beaches, gardens and indoor leisure spaces all featured strongly throughout the responses, reinforcing that play for younger children relies on access to a diverse network of formal and informal environments.

Family relationships emerged as central to children's experiences of play, with parents, grandparents, siblings often supporting access to outdoor spaces. Children consistently valued opportunities for movement, climbing, swinging, balancing, cycling, imaginative role play and contact with nature – highlighting the diverse range of play needs. Sensory experiences such as mud, sand, snow, water, sticks, trees and flowers also highlighted the importance of natural play environments.

The findings also reinforce the importance of play equipment. Swings, slides, climbing frames, flying foxes and trampolines were the most valued pieces of equipment. However, concerns around dog fouling, broken equipment, poor weather and feelings of discomfort on some equipment influenced children's experiences of outdoor play.



Figure 8- Children taking part in the engagement activity

Key messages

- Young children highly value outdoor play and social interaction.
- Parks, forests, beaches and gardens are important everyday play environments.
- Family members play a significant role in enabling access to play opportunities.
- Children value adventurous and active play experiences.
- Nature-based and sensory play opportunities are important.
- Swings, slides, climbing frames and flying foxes were among the most valued equipment.

- Dog fouling, broken equipment concerns negatively affect experiences of play.

5.3. Children in P1 to P5 pupils

The following section presents the findings from the engagement undertaken with primary school children (P1–P5) (approx. ages 5–10). The findings reflect children's experiences of outdoor play, independent mobility, safety and access to play opportunities within their local areas, children's right to play, rest and leisure. For more details, please see Appendix 6 – Engagement results

Frequency of outdoor play

Most children reported playing outdoors regularly outside school playtimes, with 38% playing outside every day and a further 44% playing outside a few days a week. Only 9% reported that they do not really go to outdoor play or hang-out spaces.

These findings suggest that outdoor play remains an important and regular part of children's everyday lives. However, the proportion of children who rarely access outdoor spaces indicates that not all children experience the same opportunities for outdoor play.

Favourite ways to play

Children identified a broad range of preferred play experiences. Active play, including running, jumping, ball games and chasing, was the most popular response. Social play, adventurous play, wheeled play and opportunities to “feel free” outdoors were also highly valued. Creative play, such as making things and building dens, alongside quieter and imaginative play, also featured strongly.

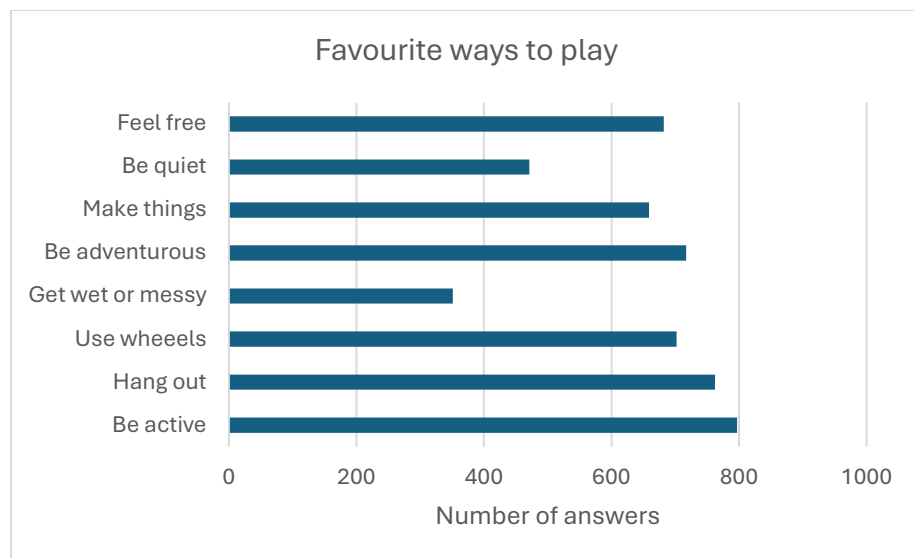


Figure 9 – Graphic illustrating the responses regarding children's favourite ways to play.

The findings reinforce the importance of providing diverse and flexible play opportunities that support physical activity, creativity, challenge, imagination, social interaction and emotional wellbeing.

Ability to do their favourite play activities locally

Most children (61%) reported that when playing in their local area they can do most of their favourite things, while 31% said they could only do some of them. A smaller proportion (8%) reported that they could hardly do any of their favourite activities locally. Overall, the findings suggest that many local areas provide opportunities for children's preferred play experiences.

Types of places children like to play in

Children expressed strong preferences for a wide range of outdoor environments. The most popular spaces included both formal and informal places such as play areas with equipment, local parks, places that feel safe from traffic, woods and

forests, school playgrounds and sports pitches. Natural environments, beaches and places with water and sand were also highly valued.

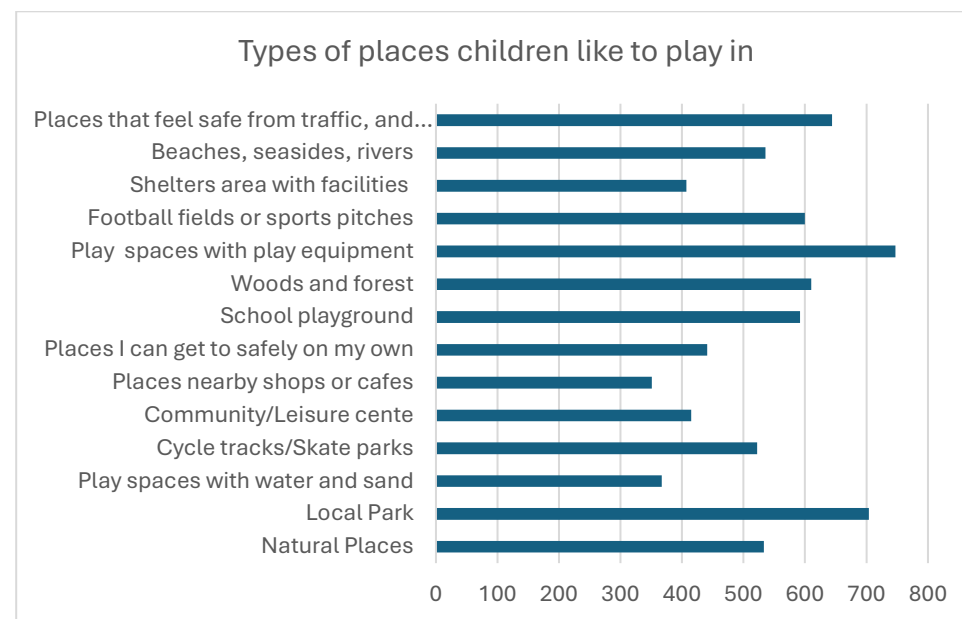


Figure 10 – Graphic illustrating children's favourite types of places they like to play in.

These findings demonstrate that children value both formal and informal play opportunities and benefit from access to a varied network of parks, natural spaces and everyday environments.

Availability of favourite places to play

Around 41% of children reported that there are "lots" of their favourite places to play locally, while a further 41% reported there are "some". However, 18% felt there were hardly any good places to play in their local area. The findings suggest that while many children experience generally positive access to play opportunities, there remain localised gaps in provision leading to inequalities in access to preferred play environments.

Favourite places to play in Edinburgh

The findings demonstrate that children value a wide range of parks, greenspaces and informal outdoor environments across Edinburgh and the surrounding area. Larger destination parks such as Saughton Park, Leith Links, Princes Street and Victoria Park were frequently referenced, reflecting their importance as places that offer a wide variety of activities. Natural environments including woods, beaches, rivers and parks with access to nature also featured throughout the responses, reinforcing the importance of green and blue spaces in children's play experiences.

Children consistently referred to spaces close to home, school grounds and neighbourhood parks, highlighting the significance of accessible local provision within everyday life. A number of responses also referenced sports pitches, skate parks, pump tracks and leisure facilities, demonstrating the importance of opportunities for active and adventurous play. Informal spaces such as streets, grassy areas, gardens and spaces near housing were also identified as valued places for play and social interaction.

Children also included a variety of indoor spaces, such as swimming pools and trampoline parks.

The findings reinforce that play for younger children relies on a diverse network of formal and informal spaces that are accessible and varied in character.

Number of outdoor spaces used regularly

Almost half (48.2%) of children regularly used one or two outdoor spaces, while around one-third regularly used three to four spaces (32.3%). Approximately one in five children reported regularly using five or more outdoor spaces.

This suggests that many children rely on a relatively small number of local play spaces, while others benefit from access to a wider network of environments that support different types of play and recreation.

Independent access to outdoor spaces

Over three-quarters of children reported having an outdoor space near home that they could walk or wheel to independently or with friends, without adults. Around 23% reported that they did not have this opportunity.

These findings highlight that many children have independent access to outdoor spaces in their local areas.

Number of spaces children can access independently

Most children who were able to access outdoor spaces independently reported being able to access only one or two spaces on their own or with friends (65%). Smaller proportions reported access to a wider range of spaces

This suggests that independent access may be limited to specific locations within children's local neighbourhoods.

Feelings of safety when playing outdoors

Most children (65%) reported that they usually feel safe when playing outdoors in their local area. However, over one-quarter only sometimes felt safe (27%), while almost 8% reported never feeling safe.

The findings suggest that although many children experience outdoor spaces positively, perceptions of safety are not uniform, and are likely to influence how children use public spaces and outdoor environments.

Travel to favourite outdoor play spaces

Walking was the most common way children travelled to their favourite outdoor play space, followed by cycling and scooting. A smaller proportion travelled by car or public transport.

These findings highlight the existing local provision of places to play, with many children relying on active travel to access outdoor play opportunities.

What would make outdoor spaces better?

Children identified a strong desire for more adventurous and inclusive play opportunities. The most requested improvements included more adventurous equipment such as zip wires and climbing features, cleaner spaces, more equipment for disabled children, safer access, toilets, areas to socialise with friends and more sports facilities.

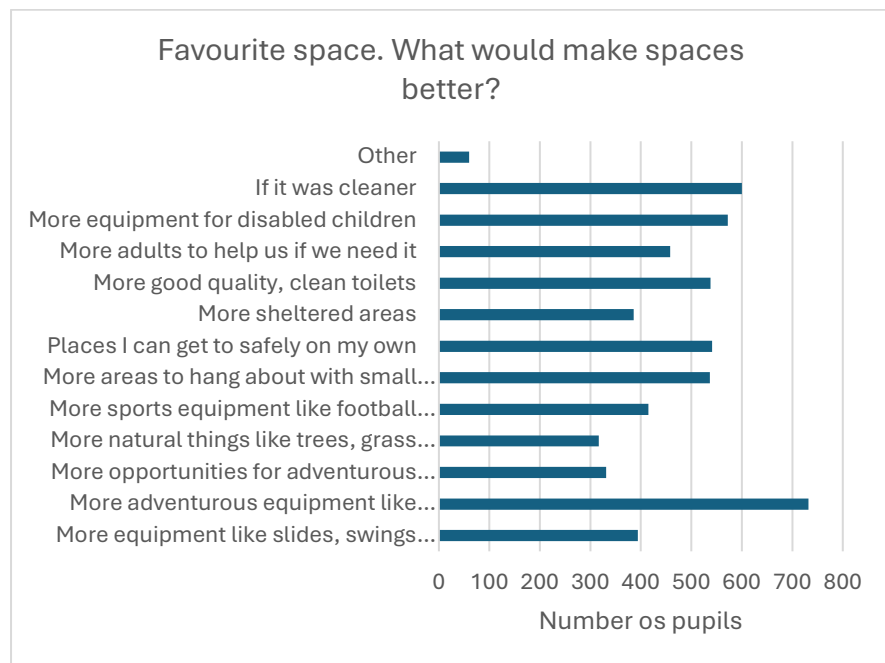


Figure 11 – Graphic illustrating children's responses on what would make outdoors spaces for play.

The findings highlight that children value stimulating, inclusive and well-maintained play environments that support a wide range of play experiences and social interaction.

What do children dislike?

Children tend to dislike spaces that have issues related to cleanliness and safety. Dog fouling, litter and dangerous items such as broken glass or needles were the most frequently identified concerns. Children also highlighted fears relating to older children, broken equipment, traffic and absence or poor-quality toilets.

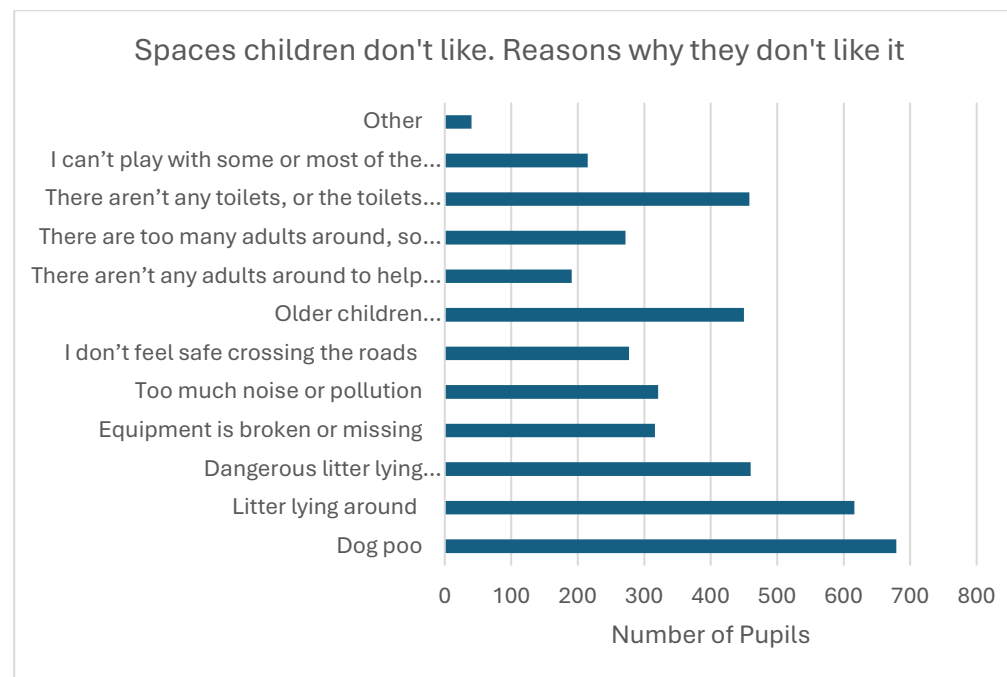


Figure 12 – Graphic illustrating children's responses on what they dislike in outdoor spaces

Overall, the findings reinforce the importance of maintenance, cleanliness, perceptions of safety in shaping children's experiences of outdoor spaces.

Summary:

The findings from the P1–P5 engagement demonstrate that outdoor play remains an important part of children’s everyday lives, with most children playing outdoors regularly. Children described enjoying a wide range of play experiences, including active, adventurous, imaginative, social and wheeled play.

Children valued both formal and informal outdoor spaces, including parks, playgrounds, woods, beaches, sports areas and spaces close to home. While most children felt there were good places to play locally, some identified gaps in provision and limited opportunities within their neighbourhoods.

Cleanliness and maintenance also strongly influenced children’s experiences, with concerns raised around litter, dog fouling and broken equipment.

A strong theme throughout the engagement was the demand for more adventurous, inclusive and stimulating play opportunities, including more challenging equipment, nature-based play, sports facilities and spaces to socialise.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of safe, accessible and varied outdoor environments that support play, independence, social interaction and contact with nature.

Key Findings

- Most children play outdoors regularly, with the majority playing outside every day or a few days a week.
- Children value a wide range of play experiences, including active, adventurous, imaginative, social and wheeled play.
- Parks, playgrounds, woods, beaches and natural spaces are highly valued.
- Many children rely on nearby outdoor spaces for regular play.
- Independent mobility and active travel are important, with many children walking, cycling or scooting to play spaces.

- Safety, cleanliness and maintenance strongly influence children’s experiences of outdoor spaces.
- Children would like more adventurous, inclusive and stimulating play opportunities.
- Cleaner spaces, better toilets, safer access and more equipment for disabled children were commonly requested improvements.

5.4. P6 to P7 Pupils

This section presents the findings from engagement with children aged 10–12 (P6–P7), undertaken as part of the Play Sufficiency Assessment process. The analysis reflects a rights-based approach, recognising children lived experiences and their right to play (UNCRC Article 31) and to express their views (Article 12). The findings help to inform the key PSA themes of quantity, quality, and accessibility of formal and informal play. For more details, please see Appendix 6 – Engagement results

Where children play, socialise and spend time

Children reported using a wide range of spaces for play and social activity. The most frequently identified locations were friends’ houses, followed by playgrounds, parks and green spaces near home, and shopping centres. Formal sports areas also featured prominently, while natural environments such as woodlands and beaches were used by a smaller but still notable proportion of children.

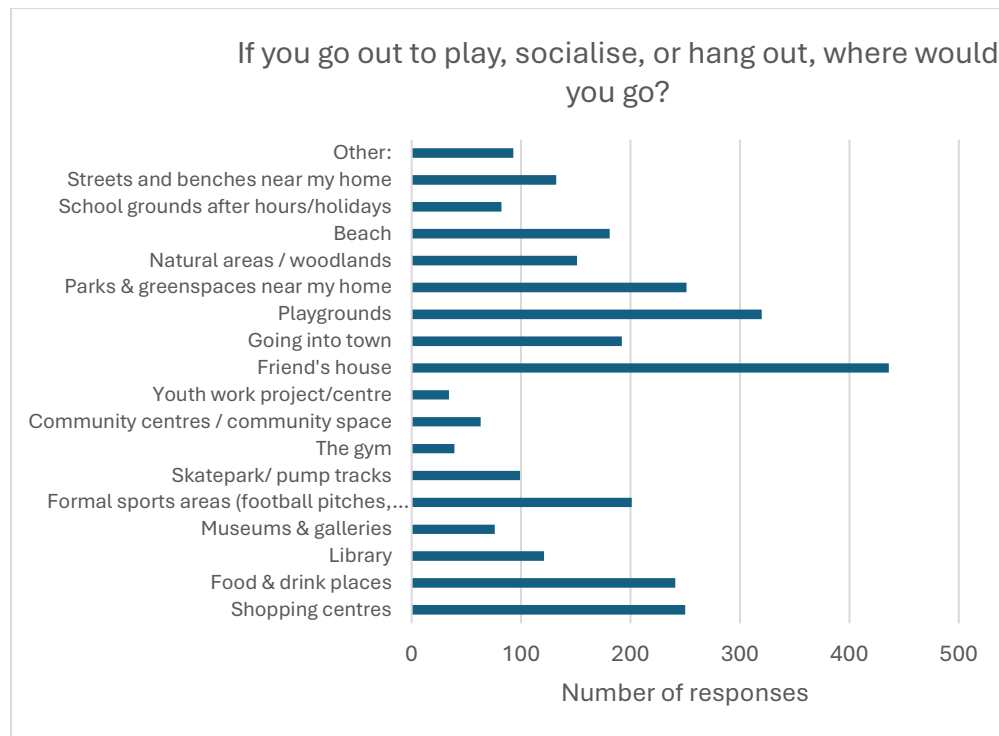


Figure 13 – Graphic illustrating children's responses on types of places where they play.

Responses to other spaces included: staying home, friend's house, gaming, sports (swimming, golf, darts, football, cycling), informal spaces such as outside/nearby their home; nature spaces such as woods, Water of Leith, Pentland Hills, commercial spaces (e.g. McDonalds, Tesco), with some mentioning they did not go out.

Opportunities during weekends and holidays

A majority of children (59%) reported that there are enough things to do during weekends and holidays, with a further 32% indicating this is only sometimes the case. A smaller proportion (5%) stated there is not enough to do. This suggests that while provision is generally adequate, there is space to improve the provision across the year, particularly outside structured times.

Use of cultural spaces

Engagement with free cultural venues such as museums and galleries was mixed, with most children attending "sometimes" (43%) or "very rarely" (36%), and only a small proportion attending "often" (7%). This indicates that while such spaces contribute to the wider play and learning environment, they are not a primary setting for play and social activity for this age group.

Frequency of use of outdoor play

The majority of children reported going outdoors to play or socialise regularly, with 69% doing so at least a few days a week, including 29% almost every day. However, over one fifth reported going out only once a week (11%) or rarely (17%). This highlights that while outdoor play is an important part of many children's daily lives, there is a proportion who experience reduced access or opportunities to engage in outdoor play outside school hours.

Availability of parks and greenspaces

Most children indicated that there are parks and greenspaces available in their local area, with responses suggesting a generally satisfactory level of geographic provision in terms of informal and formal spaces for play. Over a third of children (34%) reported that there are "lots" or "a few" (49%) parks and greenspaces nearby. However, a minority reported that there are not enough such spaces (15%), or none (2%). This suggests that while the overall quantity of provision may be perceived as sufficient, there may be local variations and inequalities in access.

Favourite parks or greenspaces in Edinburgh

The responses from children highlighted the variety of greenspaces and parks in Edinburgh. There was a strong preference for well-known large city parks such as Saughton Park, Leith Links, Inverleith Park and the Meadows. These larger parks offer a range of formal and informal play opportunities, with some of them having the largest playgrounds. However, the list of spaces revealed the names of many local parks, emphasising the importance of these neighbourhood and smaller parks for children. Some children also placed valued on familiar spaces such as "my garden" or the park "near my house". Other informal spaces such as woodlands, beach, Pentland Hills, Royal Botanic Gardens reinforce the importance of nature and opportunities for informal play and exploration. Overall, the findings

reinforce the distributed network of spaces for play (formal and informal), combining a variety of typologies of spaces such as destination parks, local parks and nature.

What children value in places

Children identified a range of factors that contribute to positive play experiences. The most important aspects were that places are fun, close to home, and easy to access. Opportunities for active play, including ball games, alongside contact with nature, were also highly valued. Feelings of safety, inclusion, and being welcome were important, as were opportunities to sit, socialise, and spend time with friends.

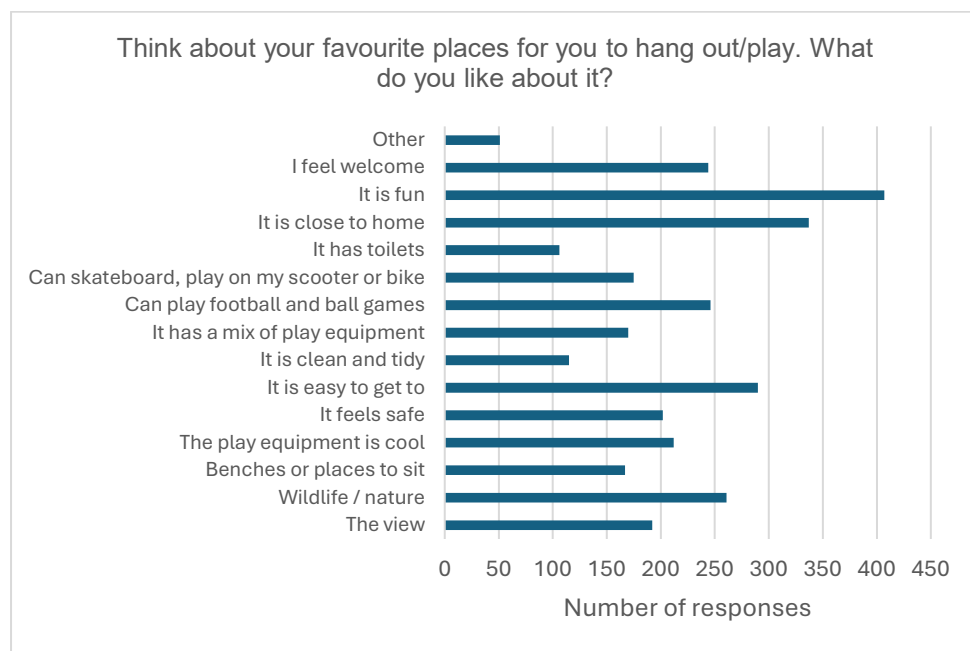


Figure 14 – Graphic illustrating children’s responses on what they like about the places where they play.

These findings highlight that effective spaces to play need to offer a balance of physical, social, and environmental qualities, supporting a wide range of play types. Accessibility and proximity are particularly important, reinforcing the value of local, everyday spaces that provide opportunities for play, both formal and informal.

Barriers to visit and use outdoor spaces

Children identified several barriers that limit their use of outdoor spaces. The most significant were weather and seasonal conditions, followed by difficulties in meeting friends, and lack of time. Other barriers included distance from preferred locations, limited equipment and activities, limited age-appropriate facilities, and insufficient seating or social spaces.

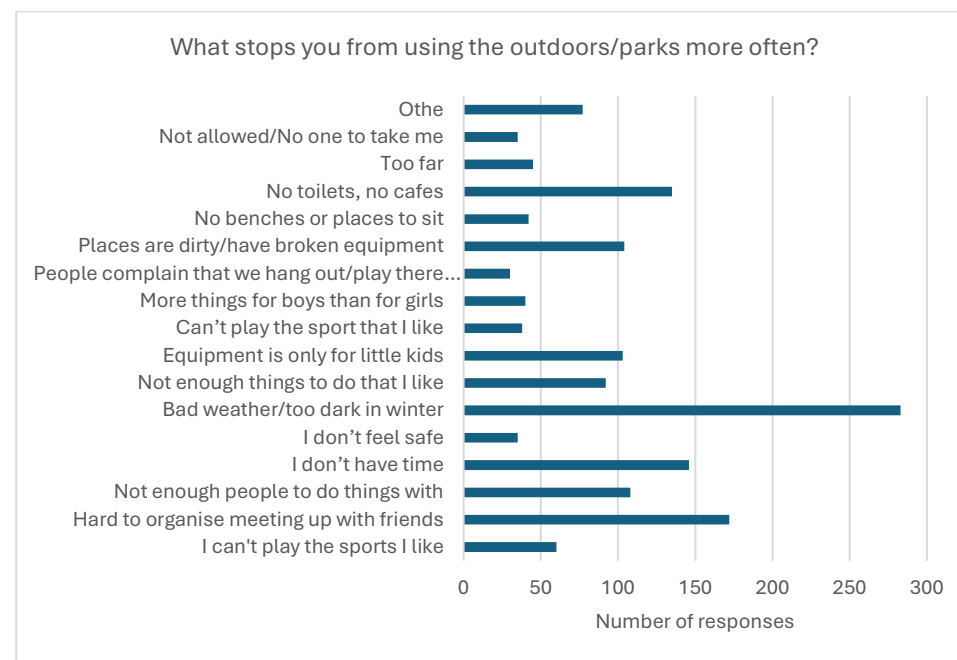


Figure 15 – Graphic illustrating children’s responses barriers to play outdoors.

These findings suggest that barriers to visit and play/hang out are not only physical but also social and environmental.

How places could be improved

Children's responses identified key themes for improvements. A strong wish for more and better provision and opportunities, often described as "more stuff" and "more fun things", "better things", including the need for age-appropriate provision. Children reported that some of the equipment is "too babyish", noting that parks should "have more big kids stuff not baby stuff" or "can be better when there are both little kids equipment and big kids equipment". More play equipment for their age group was often referred to as well as specific requests for play equipment such as slides, swings, trampolines.

Overall cleanliness, presence of litter, broken equipment, and graffiti were frequently mentioned. Children wished "places to be more tidy," "less littering and less graffiti" indicating how maintenance is a key aspect in the perceived quality of the spaces.

The wish for more supporting facilities such as toilets, seating, shelter, cafes/food, lighting was also expressed. There was a strong wish for more toilets in parks, followed by having more "have more places to sit/hang out in general", "more shelters", cafes, and more lighting: "park lights so you can see at night".

More sports related opportunities and facilities were also among the wishes for outdoor spaces. These include more skate parks, pump tracks, bike jumps, football goals, basketball courts, more sport pitches, rugby goals and gym equipment.

Besides the physical aspects of the spaces, children also mentioned the social side. Some expressed some concerns about teenagers, anti-social behaviour (e.g. vaping, drunk people), with some mentioning the presence of adults to make them feel safer.

Cleanliness of outdoor spaces

Most children rated outdoor spaces as "ok" (54%) or "clean" (25%), with smaller proportions identifying them as "dirty" or "very dirty" (17% combined), and only a small proportion considering it "very clean" (5%). This suggests that while spaces are operational, there are concerns about maintenance and cleanliness, reinforcing the findings described above.

Condition of play equipment

While 46% of children reported equipment to be in good condition, a significant proportion identified issues, including need for replacement (15%), lack of equipment (13%), and maintenance needs (25% combined). This indicates that although provision exists, quality and suitability are inconsistent, particularly for this age group of children.

Safety

The majority of children (55%) reported always feeling safe, with a further 42% feeling safe sometimes, and a small minority (3%) never feeling safe.

Gender differences are evident, with girls slightly more likely to report only feeling safe sometimes.

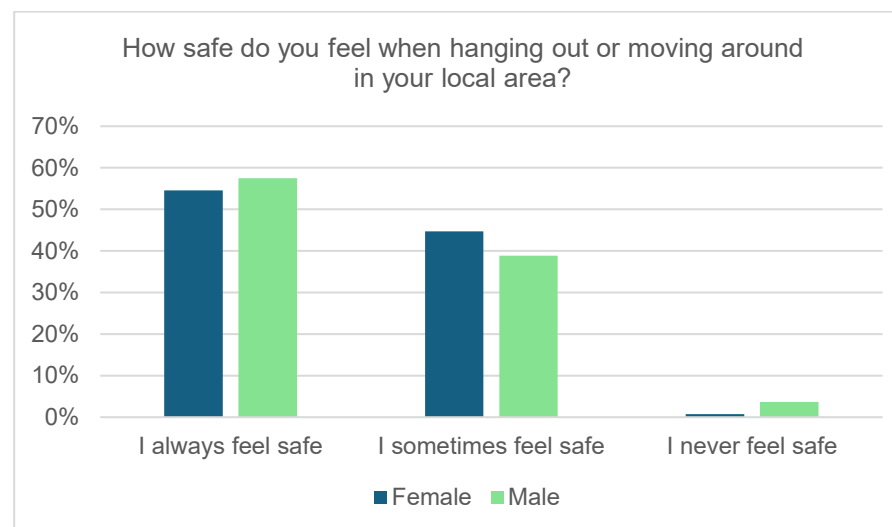


Figure 16 – Graphic illustrating children's perceived safety by gender.

When asked about the reasons for only feeling safe at some or none of the time, responses were centred around concerns about unknown individuals, often described as "strangers", "weird people", or "creepy people". Alongside this, older children and teenagers were perceived as intimidating, particularly when gathered in groups or associated with behaviours such as cycling at speed, wearing face

coverings, being rude. This indicates that social dynamics within spaces can act as a barrier to access, even where physical provision exists.

Time of day and season also had significant impact on perceived safety. Many children reported feeling less safe during darker hours, particularly in winter months.

Others referenced concerns relating to antisocial behaviour, including the presence of alcohol use, drug use, or disruptive activity. There are also indications of place-based perceptions, where certain areas are associated with higher levels of perceived danger.

Traffic and road safety were also identified concerns, particularly in relation to busy roads, fast-moving vehicles, in particular bikes.

Many children reported feeling more confident when accompanied by friends or trusted adults. Some responses also referenced experiences of being stared at, judged, or made to feel uncomfortable by others.

Summary:

The findings indicate that children in this age group have a broad range of play opportunities across formal and informal environments. Destination parks in the city, along with the use of local parks, social spaces, and neighbourhood settings are part of the network of spaces for play. While the overall quantity of provision appears broadly sufficient, there are important considerations relating to quality, accessibility and consistency of provision.

Key findings:

- The importance of local, easily accessible spaces
- The value of social play and peer interaction
- The need for age-appropriate and diverse opportunities
- More facilities in parks
- The role of maintenance and safety in shaping children's experiences

5.5. Teenagers (S1 to S6 pupils)

This section presents the findings from engagement with teenagers, undertaken as part of the Play Sufficiency Assessment process. The analysis reflects a rights-based approach, recognising young people lived experiences and their right to play, rest and leisure (UNCRC Article 31), as well as their right to express their views (Article 12). For full detail please see Appendix 6 – Engagement results

Where young people play, socialise and spend time

Teenagers reported using a wide and diverse range of spaces for socialising and informal recreation. The most frequently identified locations were friends' houses, "going into town," shopping centres, and food and drink venues. Parks and greenspaces near home also featured prominently, alongside natural environments such as woodlands and beaches. Formal sports facilities including pitches and gyms were also prominent.

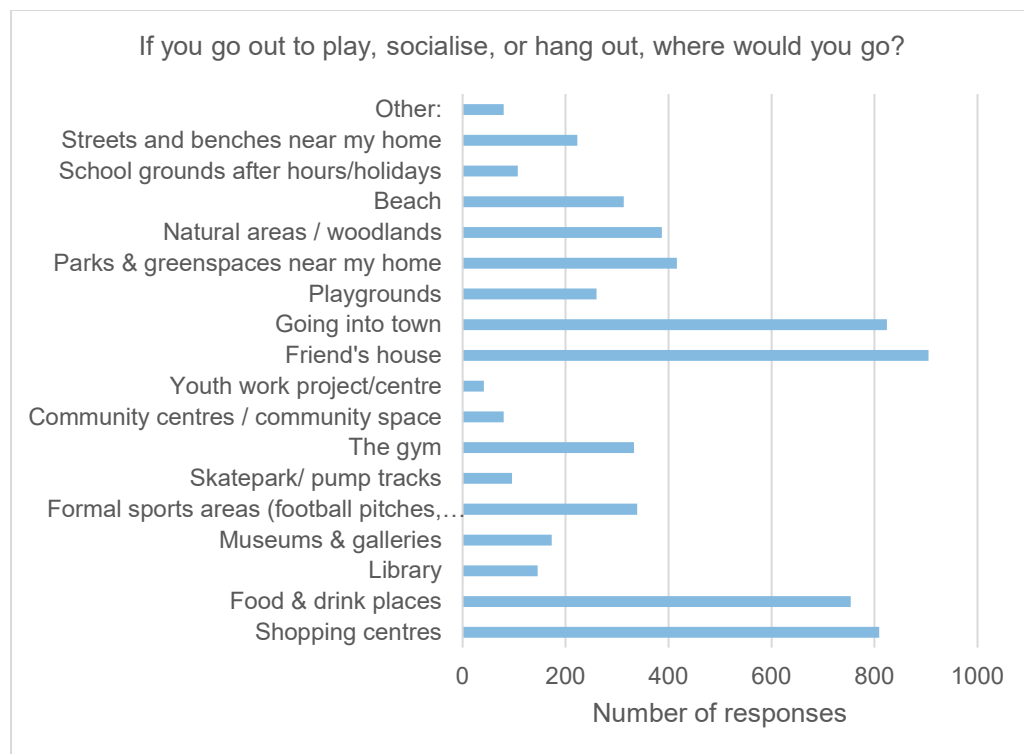


Figure 17 – Graphic illustrating teenager's types of places used to play, socialise and hang out.

A small number of responses to other spaces included: indoors (staying home, gaming), wandering (going for walks); visits to nature; commercial spaces; formal and informal sports including football, cycling, gym, and use of astro pitches. Some young people did mention they do not go out.

These findings demonstrate a clear shift in how play and leisure are experienced during adolescence, with greater emphasis on social interaction, independence, and choice of visiting commercial spaces. This reflects that play and recreation extend beyond designated play spaces, in particular playgrounds, and are embedded across everyday environments.

Opportunities during weekends and holidays

Just over half of respondents (52%) reported that there are enough things to do during weekends and holidays, with a further 36% indicating this is only sometimes the case. A smaller proportion (10%) felt that there is not enough to do. This indicates that overall, opportunities for socialising and recreation throughout weekends and school holiday periods are adequate, but there is scope to increase it.

Use of cultural spaces

Engagement with free cultural venues is relatively low, with most young people attending “very rarely” (39%) or “sometimes” (34%), and only a small proportion attending often (7%). A notable proportion (21%) reported never visiting these spaces. This suggests that while cultural provision is available, it is not a primary or preferred setting for many teenagers' leisure time.

Frequency of use of outdoor spaces to play and hang out

Most teenagers reported engaging with their local outdoor environment regularly, with 59% going outside at least a few days a week, including 18% almost every day. 16% reported going outside only once a week, and over a quarter (26%) reported going outdoors rarely, or not going outdoors at all. These findings indicate that while using outdoor spaces appears to be an important part of many young people's lives, low frequency of use is an expression for some in this age group.

Availability of parks and greenspaces

The majority of young people reported that there are “lots” (41%) or “a few” (48%) parks and greenspaces nearby, indicating generally good geographic provision. A smaller proportion (11%) reported insufficient or no access at all (1%). These findings suggest while the quantity of good greenspaces and parks is broadly adequate, there may be localised gaps in these spaces used by teenagers.

Favourite parks or greenspaces in Edinburgh

The list of favourite parks and greenspaces preferred by teenagers reflects the vast network of these spaces across Edinburgh. Well-known destination parks - particularly The Meadows, Princes Street Gardens and Saughton Park - dominate responses, reflecting their role as key social and recreational hubs. However, local neighbourhood parks also play a critical role, with many young people naming

local parks. Proximity was often the reason for a preference to local parks: *“Harrison Park as it is quite close by”; “Gyle Park as it’s close to my home.”*

Natural environments, such as Pentland Hills, Corstorphine Hill, and blue spaces such as Cramond Beach, River Almond, Water of Leith were also mentioned. Some young people also referred to local unnamed spaces, reinforcing the importance of local greenspaces.

In a smaller proportion, sports spaces also featured in the list of responses, including responses such as “astro,” “football pitch,” “basketball court.”

Overall, the findings reinforce that for this age group, the sufficiency of spaces to hang out/play is a combination of access to large spaces, such as Saughton, the Meadows and Princes Street Gardens, as well local parks, and access to nature in the outskirts of the urban boundary.

What young people value in places

Young people identified a range of factors that contribute to positive experiences in outdoor spaces. The most important aspects were that places are fun, easy to access, and close to home. Contact with nature and views were also highly valued, alongside opportunities to sit and socialise.

Feelings of safety, opportunities for active play such as ball games, and a sense of being welcome were also important.

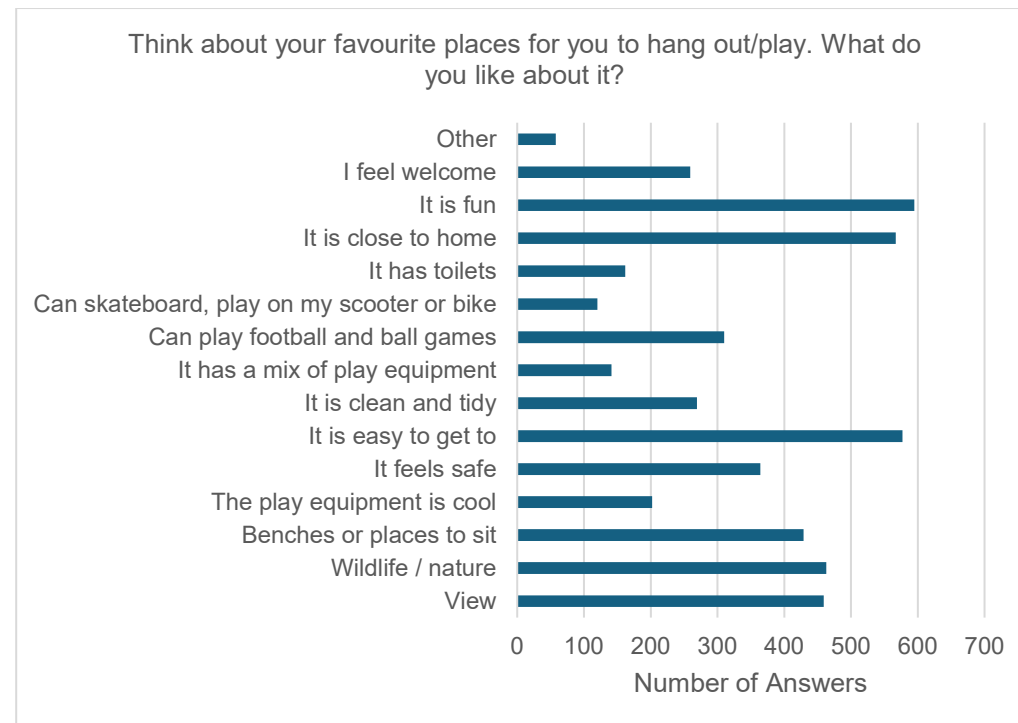


Figure 18 – Graphic illustrating teenagers’ favourite attributes about outdoor spaces

These findings highlight that successful spaces for teenagers combine accessibility, social infrastructure, and opportunities for both activity, relaxation, contemplation and contact with nature.

Barriers to visit and use outdoor spaces

Young people identified several barriers that limit their use of outdoor spaces. The most significant were weather and seasonal conditions, followed by lack of time and difficulties organising to meet friends. Other key barriers included a lack of age-appropriate facilities, with some reporting that equipment is designed primarily for younger children, as well as insufficient amenities such as toilets, cafés, and seating.

Concerns about cleanliness, maintenance, and feeling unwelcome were also identified, alongside safety concerns for a smaller proportion of respondents.

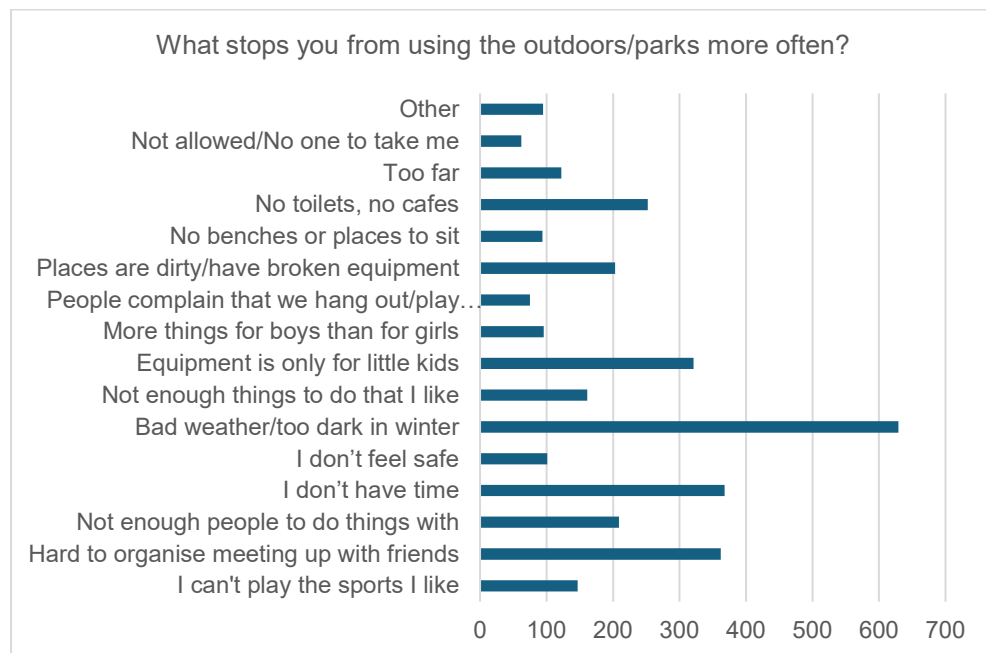


Figure 19 – Graphic illustrating teenagers' barriers to use outdoor spaces.

These findings demonstrate that barriers to play and recreation for teenagers are multifaceted, encompassing environmental, social, and developmental factors.

How places could be improved

Respondents mentioned issues related to cleanliness and maintenance, with many respondents highlighting litter, vandalism, broken equipment, and poorly maintained facilities as barriers to enjoying local spaces. This suggests that ongoing management and maintenance play a significant role in how welcoming and usable young people perceive these environments to be.

A particularly prominent theme throughout the responses was the perceived lack of age-appropriate provision for teenagers. Many young people felt that parks are

primarily designed for younger children (e.g. “more equipment for older kids”), with limited opportunities, equipment or activities aimed at older children and teenagers. Respondents asked for more spaces that felt more relevant to their age group (e.g. “more spaces for teenagers”), including social spaces, with requests to have more activities in the spaces (e.g. “more stuff to do”). Young people also wished for sports facilities, skate areas, basketball courts, football goals, and pump tracks.

Basic amenities such as toilets, benches, cafés, and sheltered areas were also identified as important factors that could improve the quality and use of spaces. Requests for sheltered or indoor spaces reflected the impact of seasonal weather and darkness on outdoor activity levels in Scotland. Similarly, lighting was proposed as ways to overcome issues around safety, particularly during winter months or in the evenings. There were also mentions of concerns included around antisocial behaviour, smoking, vandalism and feeling unsafe around certain groups or isolated areas.

Some young people also wished for better accessibility and proximity, with respondents noting that parks and outdoor spaces need to be close to home or easy to access by public transport.

Overall, the findings suggest that improving the opportunity for play, socialising and relaxation for teenagers requires more than simply increasing the number of parks or play areas. Young people are seeking clean, safe, welcoming, and flexible spaces that acknowledge teenagers as legitimate users of public space.

Cleanliness of outdoor spaces

Over half of respondents (52%) described the outdoor spaces they use as “OK”, while 31% considered them “Clean”. However, 11% described spaces as either “Dirty” or “Very Dirty”, and only 5% viewed them as “Very Clean”. Teenagers’ responses suggest that, while many outdoor spaces are viewed as acceptable, there are clear concerns regarding cleanliness and maintenance.

Condition of play equipment

Teenagers provided mixed feedback regarding the condition and suitability of outdoor play equipment. While 39% felt that equipment was in good condition, a significant proportion identified issues requiring improvement.

Overall, more than 60% of respondents identified some form of concern relating to the quality, quantity or maintenance of outdoor play equipment. This suggests that many existing spaces are not fully meeting the needs or expectations of teenagers.

Safety

Just over half of respondents (51%) stated that they “always feel safe” when hanging out or moving around in their local area, while 47% reported that they only “sometimes feel safe”. A smaller proportion (2%) stated that they “never feel safe”.

Although the proportion reporting that they never feel safe is relatively low, the findings indicate that nearly half of respondents experience some level of uncertainty or concern regarding safety in their local environment.

Gender differences were particularly notable. Male respondents were substantially more likely to report that they “always feel safe” (65%) compared to female respondents (41%). In contrast, 57% of female respondents reported only “sometimes” feeling safe, compared to 33% of male respondents.

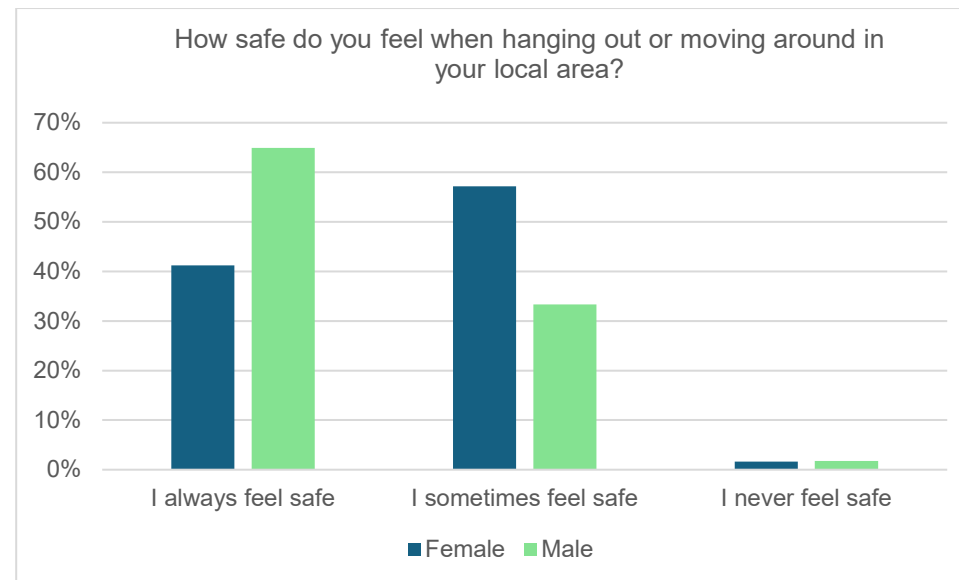


Figure 20 – Graphic illustrating children’s perceived safety by gender.

These findings suggest that experiences of safety are not consistent across all groups of young people and that girls may experience greater levels of discomfort or vulnerability within public space. Concerns around lighting, antisocial behaviour, isolation and feeling unwelcome are therefore likely to influence how and when teenagers use outdoor environments, particularly during winter months or in the evenings.

Seasonal conditions, particularly during winter months with darkness (e.g. “dark a lot of the time in winter”), and poor lighting (e.g. “in several streets there are missing streetlights and make it look dark and unsafe”) emerged as significant influences contributing to feelings of vulnerability.

Concerns about safety were also associated with the presence and behaviour of others, including unfamiliar individuals (e.g. “there’s creepy people especially in the dark”) and people perceived to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (e.g. “lots of adults and teenagers vaping and smoking”, “drug addicts in my area”).

The findings also highlight that safety is experienced unevenly, with young people reporting greater concerns when alone (e.g. “when it’s dark and I’m walking home alone, the roads are often completely deserted and that makes me nervous) or in certain neighbourhoods (e.g. “my area is dodgy”, “I live in a rough area”). Some groups—particularly girls—expressed heightened feelings of vulnerability (e.g. “as a girl and as a child ‘always’ seems impossible”, “sometimes it’s dark and you don’t know who is about especially as a girl at a young age I feel unsafe in certain situations).

Summary:

Teenagers described using a wide variety of spaces in Edinburgh, including parks, both destination and local parks, natural areas, sports facilities, shopping centres and the city centre, reflecting the changing nature of play and leisure during adolescence and the increasing importance of independence and social interaction.

Overall, most young people reported having access to parks and greenspaces nearby and using outdoor spaces regularly. However, many respondents identified barriers relating to poor weather, lack of time, safety concerns, poor maintenance and a lack of age-appropriate provision for teenagers. Many young people felt that play spaces are primarily designed for younger children and highlighted the need for more spaces to socialise, relax and take part in activities relevant to their age group.

Teenagers valued spaces that are fun, easy to access and close to home, with opportunities for socialising, sport and contact with nature. Concerns around litter, vandalism, lighting and antisocial behaviour were also common themes. The findings reinforce that play sufficiency for teenagers extends beyond formal playgrounds and includes a broad network of inclusive, safe and flexible public spaces across the city.

Key findings

- Friends’ houses, going into town, commercial spaces (shopping centres, cafes/food outlets) were among the most commonly used locations.
- Most teenagers regularly use parks, greenspaces and informal public spaces for socialising and recreation.

- Teenagers value spaces that are fun, accessible and close to home.
- There is a strong demand for more age-appropriate provision for older children and teenagers.
- Cleanliness, maintenance, seating, lighting and shelter significantly influence how spaces are experienced.
- Safety concerns, particularly around darkness and antisocial behaviour, affect how and when young people use outdoor spaces.
- Natural environments and larger destination parks such as Saughton Park, the Meadows and Princes Street Gardens remain important spaces for teenagers across the city.

5.6. Additional Support Needs

A focus group session took place with members of staff at Oaklands School to hear from staff their views about outdoors spaces for children and young people with complex additional support needs and mobility impairments.

Staff discussed the importance of safety, enclosure and spatial awareness. They explained that many pupils do not always have a clear sense of spatial boundaries, meaning that enclosed and well-defined spaces are important. Higher fencing and secure boundaries were viewed positively, particularly in supporting independent outdoor play while reducing risks associated with wandering and road safety.

Accessibility and inclusive design were consistently identified as essential considerations for outdoor play provision. Staff emphasised the importance of fully accessible play infrastructure that allows children and young people to participate without requiring lifting or specialist support. Examples included wheelchair-accessible roundabouts, trampolines with ramp access, wheelchair swings, raised sand play areas and musical play equipment at wheelchair height. Flat and smooth surfacing was considered critical, with staff noting that loose materials such as woodchip can create significant barriers for wheelchair users and those using mobility aids.

Staff also reflected on the importance of sensory and regulating spaces within outdoor environments. Enclosed play features such as tunnels and playhouses

were described as valuable for supporting emotional regulation and providing quieter retreat spaces. Participants highlighted the importance of sensory-rich play experiences, including mirrors, spinning elements, musical features, water play, textured surfaces and interactive equipment. For children and young people with visual impairments, staff identified the need for tactile paving, contrasting colours and audible wayfinding features, such as sound buttons on posts to help locate equipment and navigate spaces more independently. Communication boards were also viewed as an important feature to support inclusive communication and participation.

A strong theme throughout the discussion was that inclusive play equipment and infrastructure should be integrated throughout the wider play space, rather than positioned separately as an “add-on”. Staff highlighted the importance of designing spaces that are welcoming and inclusive for everyone, allowing children and young people of all abilities to play together.

The discussion also identified a lack of suitable outdoor community and family spaces, including sheltered areas and accessible places for social gatherings and events. Staff mentioned that many families have limited opportunities for accessible days out. Participants highlighted the need for spaces that include changing places facilities, wheelchair-accessible picnic tables and grass protection mats to improve accessibility, rather than requiring wheelchair users to remain only on the periphery.

A visit to Saughton Park was arranged so nonverbal children could also be included in the Play Sufficiency Assessment, and pupils and staff could engage with the play equipment. All participants were wheelchair users, with limited mobility. Pupils enjoyed the trampoline, the roundabout and the musical instruments.



Figure 21 – Pupil and member of staff using the accessible trampoline in Saughton Park.

During the consultation with children and young people, a member of staff from an Early Years Centre said: *“For our non-verbal children, we often visit the play park in the Leith Links and they love the basket swing!*

At Prospect Bank Special school, staff differentiated the consultation to their pupil’s needs, and 6 pupils from the Pupil Council took part. Staff displayed the questions on the smartboard, and the children dragged their photos to show what they liked or disliked.

5.7. Parents and carers

This section describes the findings from the parents and carers survey. The findings provide insight into how parents and carers access, experience and perceive outdoor spaces, playgrounds and wider play opportunities across Edinburgh. Detailed analysis can be found in Appendix 6 – Engagement results

Types of outdoor spaces visited

Parents and carers reported using a wide range of outdoor environments with children and young people. Parks were the most commonly visited spaces, followed closely by playgrounds, natural areas and woodlands, greenspaces near home and beaches. Formal sports areas were also used frequently, while skateparks and pump tracks received some responses. School grounds after hours and streets near home were less frequently identified.

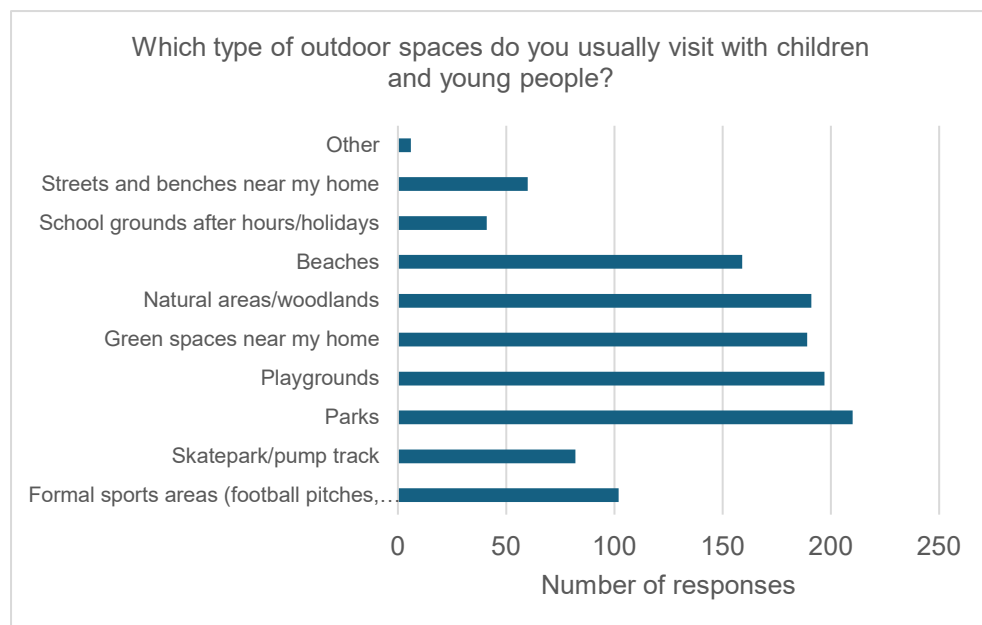


Figure 22 – Graphic illustrating parents and carers responses on types of outdoor spaces.

The findings demonstrate that families rely on a broad network of both formal and informal outdoor environments. In particular, the high number of responses relating to natural areas, greenspaces and beaches highlights the importance of access to nature and informal play opportunities alongside traditional playground provision.

Frequency of visits to outdoor spaces

Outdoor spaces appear to form a regular part of family life for most respondents. Over half of parents and carers (51%) reported visiting outdoor spaces with children a few times a week, while a further 14% reported visiting every day. Only 1% reported never visiting outdoor spaces.

Overall, around 65% of respondents visit outdoor spaces at least several times per week, demonstrating the significant role these environments play in supporting recreation, play, physical activity and family wellbeing.

Distance to the nearest outdoor space

Most respondents reported relatively good geographic access to outdoor spaces. Around 34% stated that their nearest outdoor space could be reached within less than five minutes, while a further 22% could access one within 5–10 minutes. Around one-third (32%) reported journeys of 11–20 minutes. Only 9% reported travel times greater than 20 minutes or being unable to walk, cycle or wheel there. These findings suggest that the majority of families have access to outdoor spaces within walking or wheeling distance, although accessibility inequalities remain for some households.

Access to outdoor spaces

Approximately 60% of respondents described access to local outdoor spaces as either “easy” (37%) or “very easy” (23%). However, almost one in five respondents (18%) described access as difficult or very difficult. The findings suggest that while many neighbourhoods provide accessible paths, crossings and routes, barriers relating to accessibility continue to affect number of families.

Safety of outdoor spaces

Perceptions of safety were mixed. Around 57% of respondents considered local outdoor spaces either safe (46%) or very safe (11%) for children and young

people. However, 17% considered them unsafe or very unsafe, while 26% remained neutral. These findings indicate that perceptions of safety are mostly positive, however, for some families still perceive safety as low which is likely to influence how families use public spaces and may affect confidence in allowing children greater independence outdoors.

Quality of outdoor spaces

Views regarding the quality of outdoor spaces were notably divided. While 39% of respondents were happy or very happy with local outdoor spaces, 41% reported being unhappy or very unhappy. A further 20% selected a neutral response. The findings suggest considerable variation in the quality and suitability of outdoor spaces across Edinburgh, with some communities benefiting from higher quality provision than others.

Opportunities for natural play

Parents and carers reported varied experiences regarding opportunities for children to play with natural elements such as water, sand, trees, rocks and logs. Around 43% rated these opportunities as good or very good, while approximately 34% rated them as bad or terrible. Nearly one-quarter selected a neutral response. The findings indicate that while some respondents consider that the spaces provide valuable opportunities for nature-based play, access to high-quality natural play experiences remains inconsistent.

Satisfaction with the quantity of playgrounds

Responses regarding the number of playgrounds available locally were closely divided. Around 36% of respondents reported being happy or very happy with the number of playgrounds, while 40% reported being unhappy or very unhappy. A further 25% remained neutral. These findings suggest that many families perceive gaps in local playground provision and that access to nearby play opportunities is uneven across different communities.

Frequency of visits to playgrounds

Playgrounds continue to play an important role in family routines. Around 30% of respondents reported visiting playgrounds a few times a week, while 7% visited

daily. Around one-third visited either once a week or a few times a month. However, 25% reported visiting less than once a month or never. This could be related to the age of the children under their care.

Most frequently visited playgrounds

Parents and carers identified a wide range of parks and playgrounds across Edinburgh. Frequently mentioned spaces included The Meadows, Inverleith Park, Saughton Park, and a range of different scale local neighbourhood parks. The findings reinforce the importance of both large destination parks and smaller local play spaces in supporting everyday opportunities for play and recreation.

Distance to frequently used playground

Most respondents reported being able to reach their most frequently used playground within 20 minutes. Around 18% reported journeys of less than five minutes, 29% within 5–10 minutes and 36% within 11–20 minutes. Only 13% reported journeys greater than 20 minutes or being unable to access playgrounds through walking, wheeling or cycling. These findings reveal some inequality in access to playgrounds.

Access to playgrounds

Over half of respondents (56%) described access to playgrounds as easy or very easy, while approximately 19% described it as difficult or very difficult. One-quarter of respondents selected a neutral response. The findings suggest that accessibility and safe active travel routes is mostly perceived as easy, however there is still a minority that finds it difficult.

Best aspects of playgrounds

The most positively rated aspects of playgrounds included access to the play park, play equipment, overall setting and natural environment, being a meeting place for children, meeting with other parents/carers, opportunities for different age groups.

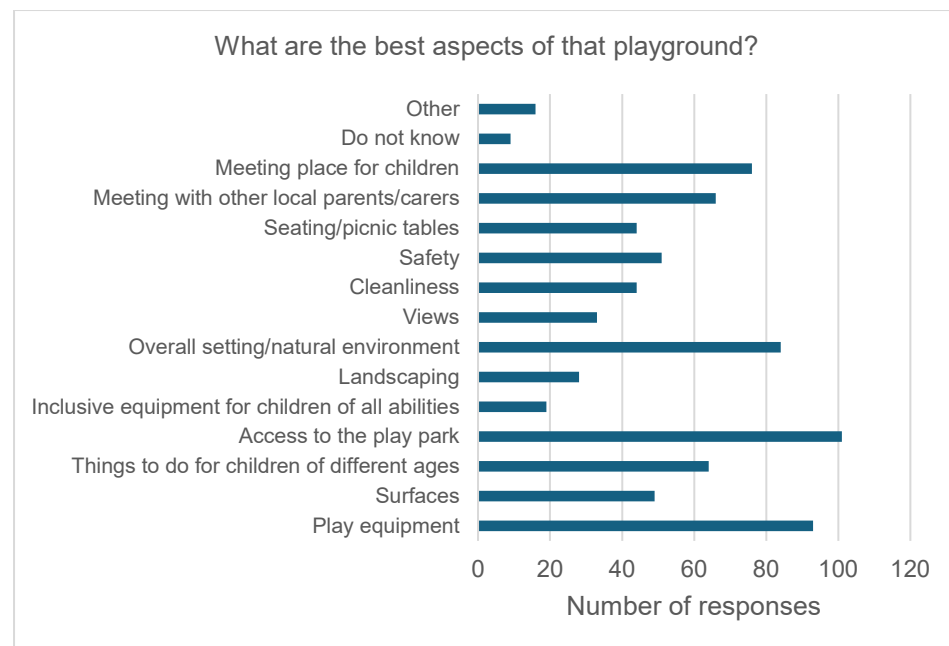


Figure 23 – Graphic illustrating parents and carers preferences about best aspects about their favourite playground.

Inclusive equipment for children of all abilities received comparatively fewer responses, suggesting that inclusive provision may not yet be widely experienced or recognised within existing playgrounds. Overall, the findings indicate that families value accessible, sociable and well-located playgrounds that support a range of play experiences.

Improvements

Parents and carers identified the main needs for improvements to playground provision. The most frequently requested improvements included: more variety of play equipment for different age groups, new equipment, more seating, more picnic tables, toilets/changing places amongst others.

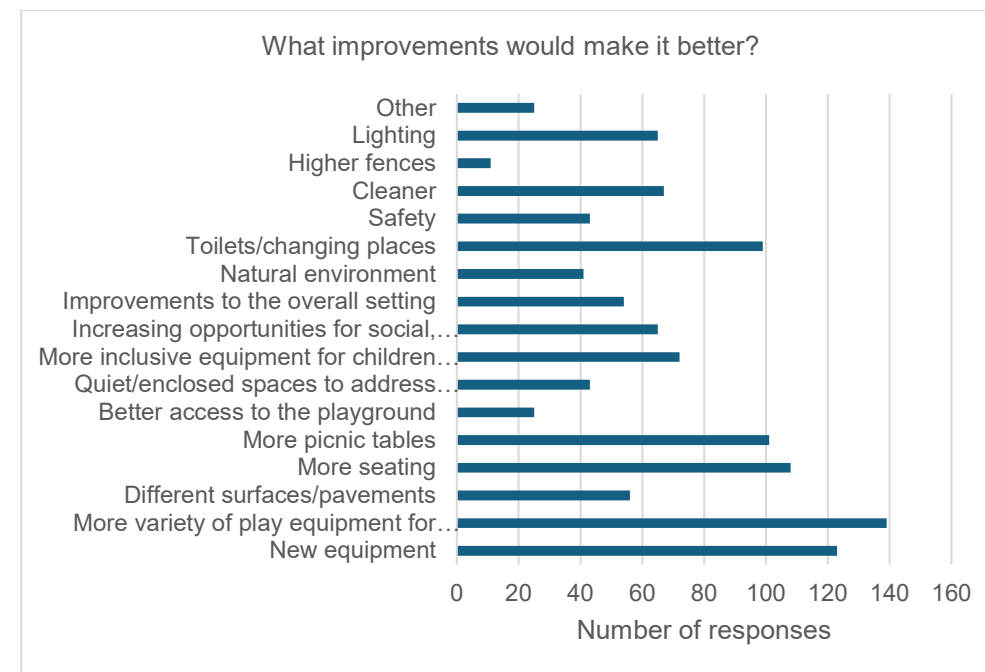


Figure 24 – Graphic illustrating parents and carers on how the playground could be improved.

Under the category of “other” relating to improvements to parks and playgrounds highlighted a number of recurring themes linked to maintenance, safety, accessibility, cleanliness and the overall quality of the play environment. The findings demonstrate demand for spaces that cater for a wide age range, with facilities that support families and community needs, are clean and well maintained.

Inclusive Play Opportunities

Only 14% of respondents felt that playgrounds in Edinburgh provide inclusive play opportunities for children of all abilities and needs. In contrast, 28% felt they do not provide inclusive opportunities, while the largest group (42%) felt that playgrounds only provide inclusive opportunities “some of the time”. These findings suggest that inclusive play provision remains inconsistent across Edinburgh and that there

is a need for improved accessibility, inclusive equipment and opportunities that better support children with differing abilities and support needs.

Open-ended questions – feedback

The open-ended responses demonstrate that parents and carers place significant value on parks, playgrounds, and outdoor spaces as essential environments for children's play, physical activity, social interaction, and wellbeing. However, the findings also reveal widespread concerns regarding the quality, maintenance, and inclusiveness of existing provision.

The most common theme related to poor maintenance, deteriorating equipment, and lack of investment in play spaces. Many parents described parks as outdated, unsafe, or poorly maintained, with repeated references to broken or removed equipment not being replaced. Safety concerns were also prominent, particularly regarding broken glass, antisocial behaviour, dangerous roads, poor lighting and conflicts with cyclists or dogs. Dog fouling emerged as a particularly strong concern, especially for families with younger children.

Another theme was the perceived lack of provision for older children and teenagers. Many respondents felt that existing playgrounds are primarily designed for younger children and do not provide enough challenge, social opportunities, or facilities for older age groups. Similarly, parents highlighted gaps in inclusive play provision, particularly for children with disabilities, mobility needs, and sensory sensitivities.

The responses also emphasised the importance of accessible local provision close to home, alongside supporting infrastructure such as toilets, seating, bins, and lighting.

Overall, the findings reinforce that play sufficiency is influenced not only by the number of spaces available, but by their quality, maintenance, accessibility, inclusiveness, and ability to support the changing needs of children, young people, and families across Edinburgh. As one respondent mentioned: *“playparks are free and open 24/7 - a lifeline at times.”*

Summary

The parents and carers questionnaire highlights the important role that parks, playgrounds, greenspaces and natural areas play in supporting children and young people's opportunities for play, recreation and social interaction across Edinburgh. Most families reported visiting outdoor spaces regularly, with parks, playgrounds and greenspaces near home being the most frequently used spaces.

Overall, respondents generally reported good geographic access to outdoor spaces and playgrounds, although some families identified barriers relating to accessibility, safety and connectivity. Perceptions of safety and quality were mixed, with concerns raised around antisocial behaviour, dangerous roads, poor lighting, broken equipment, cleanliness and maintenance.

A strong theme throughout the survey was the need for more inclusive, varied and age-appropriate play opportunities. Parents highlighted gaps in provision for older children, teenagers and children with disabilities or additional support needs. Frequently requested improvements included new and more varied play equipment, better maintenance, inclusive provision, seating, toilets, lighting and cleaner spaces.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that while many families value and regularly use Edinburgh's outdoor spaces and playgrounds, there are ongoing inequalities in quality, accessibility and inclusiveness across the city.

Key findings

- Parks, playgrounds, greenspaces and natural areas are widely used by families across Edinburgh.
- Most respondents visit outdoor spaces with children several times a week or more.
- The majority of families can access outdoor spaces and playgrounds within a 20-minute walk, wheel or cycle.
- Accessibility was generally viewed positively, although some barriers remain relating to safety and connectivity.
- Perceptions of safety and quality were mixed across different areas.

- Poor maintenance, ageing equipment and lack of investment were recurring concerns.
- Parents identified significant gaps in provision for older children, teenagers and children with disabilities or additional support needs.
- The most valued aspects of playgrounds included accessibility, play equipment, natural settings and opportunities for social interaction.
- Frequently requested improvements included more varied and inclusive play equipment, seating, toilets, lighting and cleaner spaces.

5.8. Public

The general public questionnaire explored perceptions of formal and informal outdoor play opportunities, and its wider provision for children and young people across Edinburgh. For more details, please see Appendix 6 – Engagement results

Availability and quality of greenspaces

The availability of greenspaces in the local area was viewed as very positive. 79% of respondents were either very happy (39%) or happy (40%) with the number of green and natural spaces in their local area. Only 7% were unhappy and 2% very unhappy.

Respondents rated highly the quality of the green and natural spaces. 71% of respondents were either very happy (29%) or happy (42%) with the quality. 17% were had a neutral opinion, and only 3% were very unhappy.

Perceived availability of green and open spaces for children and young people to play and hang-out around in the local area

Overall, responses to this question were mixed. Around 35% of respondents expressed positive views regarding the number of green and open spaces available locally for children to play, 41% were neutral, while approximately 24% expressed dissatisfaction.

What is working?

Respondents frequently highlighted the value of Edinburgh's parks, beaches, woods and open spaces in supporting informal play and recreation. Large destination parks such as Holyrood Park, Inverleith Park and the Meadows were often mentioned positively, alongside comments about the availability of "lots of open green space" and access to nature. Recently upgraded play spaces were also viewed positively, with respondents praising improvements at places such as Leith Links, Montgomery Street Park and Saughton Park.

Many respondents felt that existing provision works better for younger children than for teenagers and older children. Parks were often described as having "great play spaces for toddlers" and good facilities for younger age groups, while concerns emerged about the lack of age-appropriate opportunities for teenagers. Accessibility and proximity were also strongly valued, with respondents highlighting the importance of local spaces being easy to access and within walking distance of homes and schools.

However, concerns regarding safety, environmental quality and maintenance remained visible throughout the responses. Litter, broken glass, graffiti, antisocial behaviour and deteriorating equipment were commonly mentioned, with some spaces described as "run down" or poorly maintained.

Improvements to spaces

Maintenance, repairs and investment in existing parks and playgrounds were frequently mentioned. Many respondents described playgrounds as outdated, damaged or poorly maintained, with repeated concerns about broken or removed equipment not being replaced. Respondents called for better maintenance, regular repairs and more modern and varied play equipment.

A particular concern regarding the lack of provision for teenagers and older children. Respondents highlighted the need for more spaces for socialising, adventurous play and informal recreation, including skateparks, outdoor gyms and safe meeting places. Safety concerns were also frequently raised, particularly around dangerous roads, antisocial behaviour, e-scooters, vandalism and poor lighting.

Cleanliness and environmental quality emerged consistently throughout the responses. Dog fouling, litter, overflowing bins and poor maintenance were identified as barriers affecting the quality of outdoor play environments. Respondents also highlighted the need for more inclusive and accessible play opportunities for disabled children and children with additional support needs, alongside improved supporting facilities and accessible equipment.

Another recurring theme was the importance of smaller neighbourhood play spaces and more opportunities for nature-based play. Respondents highlighted the value of local provision within walking distance of home, alongside greener environments that support informal and sensory play experiences.

Summary

The findings demonstrate that residents highly value Edinburgh's parks, greenspaces and outdoor play environments, particularly large parks, natural spaces and recently improved playgrounds. While the availability of greenspaces was viewed positively, perceptions of formal play provision were more mixed, particularly for teenagers and older children. Concerns regarding maintenance, ageing equipment, safety, accessibility and environmental quality emerged consistently throughout the responses. Respondents highlighted the need for more inclusive, safer and better-maintained spaces, alongside more opportunities for teenagers, adventurous play and local neighbourhood provision.

Key points

- Residents value access to parks, greenspaces, beaches and natural environments.
- Recently refurbished and well-maintained parks were viewed positively.
- Provision for younger children was viewed more positively than provision for teenagers.
- Maintenance, ageing equipment and safety were among the strongest concerns raised.
- Respondents identified significant gaps in provision for older children and teenagers.
- Inclusive play and accessibility for disabled children remain inconsistent across the city.

- Cleaner, safer and better-maintained spaces were repeatedly identified as priorities for improvement.

5.9. Community Councils

The survey explored the perceptions of Community Councils (CCs) in Edinburgh regarding formal and informal outdoor play opportunities for children and young people in their local areas.

Quantity of outdoor spaces for formal and informal play

The availability of formal play provision was commonly described as limited, whereas informal play opportunities were more often viewed positively. This suggests that some communities benefit from access to parks, woodlands and wider greenspaces, but may lack dedicated formal play facilities and equipped spaces.

Quality of outdoor spaces for formal and informal play

The overall quality of both formal and informal play spaces was most commonly rated as 'fair'. Informal play spaces received slightly more positive responses overall, with more respondents rating them as 'very good' compared to formal spaces. However, both categories also received negative ratings, demonstrating inconsistencies in quality across different areas of the city.

Factors influencing perceptions of formal play spaces included the age and condition of equipment, safety considerations, opportunities for different age groups, accessibility for disabled children and those using wheelchairs or prams, and the general maintenance and cleanliness of sites.

For informal spaces, respondents valued access to greenspaces, opportunities for a range of activities, proximity to homes, and the overall maintenance of the environment, including issues relating to litter, dog waste and vegetation management.

Accessibility of outdoor spaces for formal and informal play

In terms of accessibility, responses indicate that while many play spaces are geographically present within communities, the quality and safety of routes to

these spaces can present challenges. Most respondents selected 'neutral' when asked about the ease of walking, wheeling or cycling to play spaces, suggesting that accessibility is variable across different neighbourhoods.

Busy roads and a lack of safe crossings were identified as the most significant barriers to accessing play spaces, highlighting concerns around road safety and active travel infrastructure. Safety concerns, physical barriers and poorly maintained pathways were also commonly raised. Community Councils also highlighted concerns around transport links and long travelling distances to some play opportunities.

Perceptions of inclusivity were mixed. While many respondents considered local play spaces to be inclusive or partly inclusive, concerns were raised regarding accessibility for disabled children and the lack of facilities catering for different age groups, particularly teenagers and older children. Respondents highlighted the need for more wheelchair-accessible equipment, sensory play opportunities, seating and spaces that support a broader range of informal and social activities.

Gaps and needs

Community Councils identified a number of gaps and priorities for improvement across local play provision. Common themes included the need to upgrade ageing play facilities, improve maintenance and cleanliness, and provide more inclusive and accessible spaces for children and young people of different ages and abilities. Respondents also highlighted the need for safer and better-connected walking, wheeling and cycling routes to play spaces, alongside improved crossings and pathway infrastructure. Additional gaps included limited provision for teenagers, a lack of facilities for activities beyond football and rugby, and the need for more small-scale local play opportunities and community spaces close to housing.

5.10. Focus groups

This section describes the findings from the various focus groups that took place during the engagement process for the Play Sufficiency Assessment.

5.10.1. Young carers

The focus group with young carers explored how children aged 7–10 experience their local areas, travel, play and outdoor spaces across Edinburgh.

Local area

Children described strong connections to familiar places within their neighbourhoods. Local parks, greenspaces, swimming pools and landmarks were frequently identified positively, including Lochend Park, Arthur's Seat, King George V Park, Glenogle Swim Centre and Royal Commonwealth Pool.

Children valued spaces that supported active and adventurous play, including hills, climbing features, ziplines and obstacle courses. Accessibility and proximity also emerged as important themes, with children valuing places close to friends, shops and home. The findings suggest that nearby provision is particularly important for young carers, who may have fewer opportunities to travel further from home due to caring responsibilities.

In terms of improvements, children mentioned more bins, soft play, theme parks and water play opportunities.

Playing and hobbies

Outdoor play and social interaction were strongly linked to informal, flexible and nature-based experiences. Children described enjoying climbing, trampolining, ball games, hammocks, exploring and "chilling". Nature-rich environments such as woods, hills and parks featured prominently throughout the discussions.

The social aspect of play was also important, with children frequently mentioning spending time with friends and family. The findings suggest that children value outdoor environments that support freedom, adventurous play and social interaction.

Children expressed a strong desire for more adventurous and physically challenging play opportunities. Suggestions included taller climbing structures, giant treehouses, monkey bars, gymnastics bars and water-based play. Swings were also highlighted as important, including accessible swings for disabled children. Participants additionally highlighted the importance of cleaner environments and places to socialise.

Children's drawings frequently included grass, trees, swings, slides, climbing structures, trampolines, flowers, water features and open greenspace. Several drawings also included imaginative and adventurous elements such as water parks, Ferris wheels and treehouses.



Figure 25 –Children's drawings on outdoor spaces for play.

Children's drawing:

Main features:

- grass,
- trees,
- swings,
- slides,
- climbing structures,
- water,
- flowers,
- trampolines,
- and open green space.

Several drawings included imaginative and adventurous elements such as:

- water parks,
- Ferris wheels,
- treehouses,
- large climbing opportunities.

Summary

The focus group highlighted the importance of accessible local outdoor spaces that support informal play, social interaction, independence and wellbeing for young carers. Local parks, greenspaces and neighbourhood facilities were particularly valued, reflecting the importance of nearby provision for children who may spend more time close to home due to caring responsibilities.

Children strongly valued nature-based and adventurous play opportunities, alongside opportunities to spend time with friends and family. Overall, the findings reinforce that play sufficiency for young carers depends not only on formal playgrounds, but also on safe, welcoming and easily accessible neighbourhood spaces that support everyday play, relaxation and social connection.

5.10.2. Teenage girls

The engagement sessions with teenage girls provide important insight into how teenage girls experience public spaces, outdoor play and social environments across Edinburgh.

Social spaces

Outdoor spaces were valued mainly as places to socialise, relax and spend time with friends, rather than spaces focused only on formal play or sport. Girls frequently described using places such as the Meadows, Princes Street, St James Quarter, Portobello Beach, cafés and local parks. These spaces were valued because they felt comfortable, familiar, peaceful and fun — places where they could “be yourself” and “chill”. Seating was repeatedly identified as important, particularly spaces that allow groups to sit together comfortably.

Nature and wellbeing

Many girls valued quieter natural environments for relaxation, emotional wellbeing and reflection. Places such as the Pentland Hills, Holyrood Park and Royal Botanic Gardens were described as “peaceful”, “quiet” and relaxing. Several girls discussed enjoying time alone or in small groups within nature, suggesting outdoor spaces support mental wellbeing as well as social interaction.

Lack of provision specifically for teenage girls

Girls highlighted that many outdoor spaces are designed either for younger children or for boys' activities, particularly football. Participants identified a lack of places to sit and socialise, sheltered gathering spaces and facilities for activities they enjoy. The girls also discussed the lack of provision for sports such as badminton, volleyball and netball, compared with the number of football pitches available.

Features and facilities

Shelter and weather protection emerged as important themes throughout the discussions. Girls described rain, cold weather, wind and darkness during winter as major barriers to spending time outdoors. Lighting was also repeatedly identified as essential for both comfort and safety, particularly during winter and after dark.

Girls also discussed the importance of supporting infrastructure, including toilets, seating, bins, cafés, charging points and accessible sports equipment. There was interest in flexible and sociable spaces such as stages, circular benches and sheltered gathering areas. Participants highlighted the importance of having spaces where different groups can socialise comfortably without conflict.

Girls' experiences of safety

Safety was an emerging theme. Girls described feeling unsafe in outdoor spaces, particularly after dark, during winter, when alone, or when spaces were dominated by boys or groups of men. Common concerns included harassment, antisocial behaviour, vaping, intimidation and poor lighting. Girls also described how some public spaces feel socially dominated by others, including boys occupying sports areas and adults judging groups of teenage girls.

Summary

The findings highlight that teenage girls experience outdoor spaces differently from younger children and often differently from boys. Girls valued parks, beaches, natural environments and city spaces as places to socialise, relax and spend time with friends. Safety, social connection and belonging emerged as central themes throughout the discussions.

Many existing spaces were perceived as lacking provision specifically designed for teenage girls, particularly sheltered social spaces and opportunities for activities such as badminton, volleyball and netball. Safety concerns relating to harassment, poor lighting and antisocial behaviour strongly influenced how girls used outdoor spaces, particularly during winter and after dark.

Overall, the findings reinforce that play sufficiency for teenage girls extends beyond formal play provision and includes safe, welcoming, sociable and inclusive public spaces that support friendship, emotional wellbeing, independence and informal recreation.

5.10.3. Neurodivergent young people

The focus group with neurodivergent young people from Mindroom explored how young people aged 15–19 experience outdoor spaces, parks and wider environments across Edinburgh.

Familiar spaces

A theme throughout the discussion was the importance of spaces that feel safe, familiar and emotionally comfortable. Participants described both indoor and outdoor favourite places such as: “my house” “my bed”, “the pond in the park near my house”. They mentioned some parks and greenspaces such as the Gyle Park, the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, the Meadows, Holyrood Park, Roseburn Path, Portobello Beach. Young people explained that these places felt special because they were safe, familiar and comfortable.

Nature and greenspaces

Nature emerged as one of the strongest positive themes throughout the discussion. Young people consistently valued: greenspaces, trees, wildlife, ponds, birds, beaches, and quieter natural environments.

Overwhelming outdoor spaces

Participants described some of the reasons why public spaces can sometimes feel overwhelming. Reasons included: litter, vaping, drunk people, bad behaviour, and dogs off leads. Dogs off the leads were described as “unpredictable”.

Participants also discussed the topic around noise, crowding and overstimulation. They described challenges on how spaces can sometimes be too noisy, too many children screaming around in the playgrounds, crowded areas and sometimes loud music. For example, a few participants mentioned preferring rainy weather because spaces become quieter, with less people: “I like it when it is raining because it is comfortable”.

Wishes for outdoor spaces

Key aspirations for outdoor spaces expressed through the “magic wand” exercise included: quieter spaces, spaces away from other people, places to sit that are not exposed, more enclosed spaces, but still with good views across (e.g. for example a meadow but with trees surrounding it), wildflowers, more nature, places to observe birds/wildlife. Other participants wished for more equipment such as swings, and that no antisocial behaviour would be allowed such as vaping.

Summary

The focus group with neurodivergent young people highlighted the importance of safe, familiar and nature-rich outdoor environments that support sensory comfort, wellbeing and opportunities for quiet social interaction.

The strongest positive themes related to greenspaces, wildlife, parks, beaches and quieter environments. The need for quieter and less crowded spaces was a strong theme. Noise, loud music, vaping, litter and unpredictable social behaviour were all identified as barriers affecting enjoyment of outdoor environments.

The findings also highlighted the importance of sensory-aware design, including sheltered seating, enclosed but visually open spaces and opportunities for retreat and observation. Swings and movement-based play were repeatedly valued, suggesting the importance of sensory regulation and calming movement opportunities. There is also a suggestion of predictability and control.

Overall, environments need to allow young people to choose how close they are to others, retreat when needed, observe without feeling exposed, and access nature without being overwhelmed.

5.10.4. Children and young people - Livity

This focus group with children and young people, mostly living in Niddrie and Craigmillar, explored their experience of their local areas, outdoor spaces, recreation and safety.

Outdoor spaces for recreation

During the session most young people mentioned that they tend to remain within their immediate local areas and do not travel far across the city. Local destinations such as Jack Kane Centre, local shops, school, library and Fort Kinnaird were repeatedly identified as the main places used for socialising and recreation. The majority of young people mentioned they tend to stay in the neighbourhood and do not venture too far. Fort Kinnaird, a commercial space, was identified as a key destination because it combines shops, food outlets, and opportunities to meet friends and is accessible by bus.

Although the majority of participants use local spaces, other spaces across the city included: Fountain Park, Air Hop, Cinema, Princes Street, St James and football pitches (football practice at Gracemount).

Safety

Young people differentiated between daytime and nighttime experiences, with many stating that spaces feel significantly less safe in the evening. Concerns included: people wearing masks on bikes, dangerous traffic, poorly lit streets, fear of walking at night, broken glass, and antisocial behaviour. One participant stated: “I am scared to walk around at night. Bad things happened in this area.”

Young people repeatedly identified improved lighting as one of the most important changes needed to improve safety. Traffic safety was also a recurring issue, particularly around busy roads, crossing points and safer routes to school.

Local environment’s quality and maintenance

When referring to their local area, participants frequently referred to litter, broken glass, dog fouling, and damaged equipment.

Jack Kane was identified as the main recreation space; however, participants highlighted several limitations: poor quality (“not very clean”; “a lot of poo and broken glass.”); poor quality Astro pitches; insufficient play opportunities; and facilities aimed mainly at younger children. Young people stated: “There is not much to do around, and the equipment is for younger children.”, and one other mentioned “there are bikes around” which decreases feelings of safety.

Requests for their local area included: more football spaces, larger Astro pitches, more equipment, and safer recreational areas.

Summary:

The findings from the Niddrie and Craigmillar focus group demonstrate that children and young people rely heavily on local neighbourhood spaces for recreation, social interaction, and day-to-day activities. Local parks, sports facilities, schools, shops, and nearby destinations such as Fort Kinnaird play an important role in recreation.

However, the discussion also highlighted several significant challenges affecting the quality of children and young people’s experiences. Key issues included concerns around safety, poor lighting, antisocial behaviour, traffic, litter, broken glass, and poorly maintained recreational infrastructure. Young people consistently expressed the view that there are insufficient high-quality and age-appropriate opportunities for older children and teenagers, particularly in relation to sports and informal social spaces.

5.10.5. Children and young people – Passion4fusion

This activity with children and young people from Passion4Fusion. A charity located in Wester Hailes, provided an important insight into how children and young people – many from a diverse ethnic background – experienced their local area and recreation.

Outdoor spaces and places for recreation

One of the strongest positive themes throughout the engagement was the value placed on nature and greenspaces. Participants frequently described their local

area as very green, with many grassed areas, trees, and peaceful parks and woodlands.

The drawing exercise further reinforced the importance of peaceful greenspaces and parks to participants. Many children and young people drew or wrote about their local area, highlighting some of its best aspects and the outdoor spaces they valued most. Nonetheless, participants also identified opportunities for improvement, including requests for more trees, improved parks, and better maintenance of outdoor spaces.

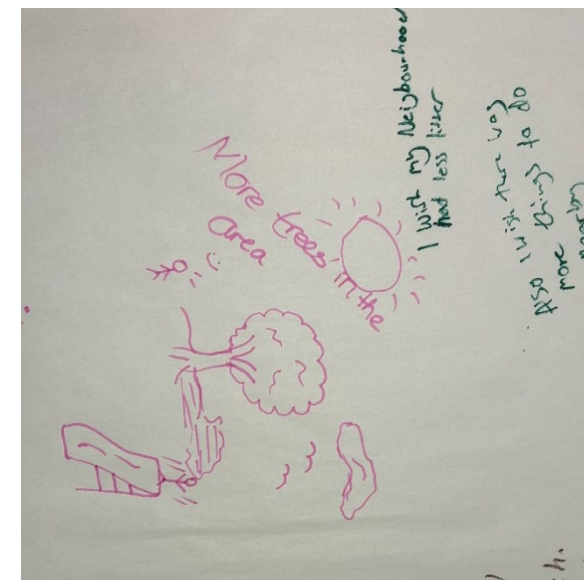


Figure 26- Drawing from the focus group, illustrating outdoor spaces.

Provision for play and recreation was viewed moderate. Participants described the availability of informal places to play and spend time outdoors; however, many also highlighted a lack of activities and recreational opportunities. Some participants referred formal spaces for play. Westside Playground was described positively, particularly the trampoline, which generated enthusiasm among children and young people. Other playgrounds were generally described as “okay”. Participants emphasised that many playgrounds are primarily designed for younger children and that there is a lack of suitable play and recreational spaces for older children and teenagers. While some participants referred the presence of basketball courts, they also noted that there was “not much else to do” or engage with. The absence of Astro facilities was also highlighted. Although some children and young people reported playing football outdoors, participants identified a lack of appropriate facilities for the sport.

Quality

When describing their local area, participants raised concerns regarding litter, vandalism, broken playground equipment, overflowing bins, and damaged recreational infrastructure. Vandalism affecting public recreational spaces, particularly basketball courts and table tennis areas, was also highlighted as a key issue impacting the quality of the local environment.

Safety

The majority of participants reported feeling safe in their neighbourhoods, with no major distinction between daytime and nighttime experiences. However, there were still concerns around: vandalism, broken equipment, bike theft, and environmental neglect.

Summary

Overall, the engagement highlighted the importance of nature, greenspaces, and informal outdoor environments within participants' neighbourhoods. Children and young people valued the presence of parks, woods, grassed areas, and peaceful outdoor spaces, which were viewed positively and frequently associated with opportunities for relaxation, play, and recreation. However, participants also identified a need for improvements to the quality and maintenance of outdoor spaces, including requests for more trees, cleaner environments, and better recreational infrastructure.

While informal opportunities for outdoor play were generally considered available, there was a clear perception that there are limited activities and age-appropriate recreational opportunities for older children and young people. Formal spaces for play were often viewed as more suitable for younger children, with participants highlighting gaps in provision for teenagers, particularly in relation to sports facilities such as Astro pitches and spaces for football and other activities.

Environmental quality emerged as a significant theme throughout the engagement, with concerns raised regarding litter, vandalism, broken equipment, overflowing bins, and damaged recreational facilities. Despite these issues, most participants reported feeling generally safe within their neighbourhoods. However,

environmental neglect and vandalism were identified as factors that negatively influence perceptions and experiences of local outdoor spaces.

5.10.6. Children and young people – Score Scotland

This focus group with young people from Score Scotland provided a valuable insight into how teenagers and young adults from different parts of Edinburgh experience their local areas, public spaces and recreation opportunities across the city

Favourite places

Participants frequently identified home-based spaces as their favourite places, including home and their bedroom. These spaces were associated with feeling safe, comfortable, “comfy”, freedom, and relaxation.

At the same time, a number of outdoor spaces were positively identified, including Cramond, Blackford Hill, Saughton Park, football pitches, Princes Street, and the city centre. Participants particularly valued spaces that offered: views, freedom, social opportunities, and opportunities to relax outdoors.

During their free time, young people described visiting shopping centres, going into town, parks, football pitches, and community centres. These were the described as the main places to socialise and spend time with friends.

Limited provision for teenagers and older young people

A recurring theme throughout the session was the perception that many outdoor spaces and play areas are primarily designed for younger children rather than teenagers. Participants stated: “it is mostly for younger children.” Young people highlighted a strong demand for: “cooler equipment for teens”, more swings, more benches, more affordable activities, more sports provision, shelters, and social spaces designed around teenage use.

Participants identified a range of barriers affecting access to sports and recreation opportunities. Young people requested: more badminton spaces, netball facilities, volleyball spaces, more basketball provision, and additional pitches. A key issue

was restricted access to existing facilities. Participants also described: astros being locked, spaces requiring booking and lack of freely accessible facilities.

Quality and maintenance

Young people expressed largely positive views regarding Edinburgh's greenspaces and natural environment. Participants described the city as: green, having many parks, large green areas, back gardens, and many trees. However, concerns were also raised about: litter, lack of bins, rubbish trapped in fences, dog fouling, vandalism, broken equipment, and poor appearance of buildings and public spaces. Young people from Muirhouse were particularly negative about their local area, describing it as: "not nice and not clean."

Safety

Perceptions of safety were mixed. Many participants reported feeling generally safe in the spaces they use, while others felt 'okay'. Nonetheless, several concerns were still raised around: darkness, feeling unwelcome, vandalism, and misuse of spaces. "Sometimes people say things to us, we do not feel very welcome."

Summary

The findings from the Score Scotland focus group demonstrate young people value both private and public spaces that provide opportunities for social interaction, sports activities and access to nature. Parks, greenspaces, football pitches, shopping centres, and community spaces play an important role in supporting socialising and recreation for young people across a range of Edinburgh neighbourhoods.

Young people consistently expressed the need for more youth-focused spaces, affordable activities, accessible sports provision, and informal social infrastructure such as seating and sheltered gathering spaces. While sports infrastructure exists, young people may experience barriers in terms of affordability, availability, accessibility, and informal use.

Although most participants reported generally feeling safe, concerns remained around poor lighting, vandalism, feeling unwelcome in some spaces, and lack of accessible facilities.

Overall, the focus group suggests that while Edinburgh provides valued greenspaces and community facilities, important gaps remain in relation to teenage provision, environmental quality, informal social spaces, and meaningful opportunities for participation and inclusion.

5.10.7. Children and young people –Stepping Stones North Edinburgh

These two engagement sessions with children and young people from North Edinburgh — including Pirniehall, Drylaw, Muirhouse, Granton, and West Pilton — provide a strong combined picture of how children and young people experience their local neighbourhoods, public spaces, safety, and recreational opportunities.

Local area

Participants across both sessions identified several valued local spaces used in their free time, including Astro pitches (at Craigroyston Community High School), Spartans sports clubs, Ainslie Park, local parks, library and community clubs.

The young people described spending time: walking locally, playing football, socialising outdoors, visiting parks, or using local sports facilities.

When indoors, they referred spending time in their digital activities such as VR, Xbox, phones, iPad, PlayStation and other screen-based activities.

Participants appreciated the trees, open views, wide space and the fact Edinburgh is relatively green.

Lack of provision for young people and teenagers

The sessions highlighted a clear lack of provision for older children and teenagers. Existing play spaces were frequently described as: too limited, mainly for younger children, or lacking variety and challenge.

They also highlighted that there were not enough parks, not enough football pitches, not enough facilities for teenagers and insufficient variety of things to do. Furthermore, young people highlighted affordability as a barrier.

When prompted on what they would like to see in the spaces, young people requested: more Astros, badminton spaces, gyms, ziplines, climbing facilities, parkour, basketball, go-karting, water parks, bouldering, optical illusion parks, and places to “chill”.

Accessibility emerged as an important theme, with better wheelchair access, more accessible buildings and wider spaces.

There was also a strong emphasis on accessible sports provision, with free access (no bookings or fences) and facilities always being open: “more Astros with access at all times and no fences”.

Safety

Participants raised concerns around gangs, drug dealing, vandalism, broken glass, speeding vehicles, unsafe alleyways, graffiti, fires, and antisocial behaviour.

Greater feelings of safety were associated with open, overlooked, well-maintained, and active spaces. Therefore, young people requested more police, more CCTV, safer open spaces, more lighting and removal of unsafe alleyways.

Summary

The findings from the North Edinburgh engagement sessions demonstrate that children and young people value accessible parks, sports facilities, greenspaces, and opportunities for social interaction. Many young people felt that existing recreational provision is insufficient for teenagers and lacks variety, challenge, and accessible opportunities. There was a demand for improved sports facilities, cleaner and safer public spaces, more inclusive environments, and greater investment in activities and facilities for older children and young people.

However, the sessions also revealed significant concerns regarding safety, antisocial behaviour, environmental quality, and lack of youth-focused provision

Overall, the engagement suggests that while there are valued community assets and greenspaces within north Edinburgh, there remain important gaps in relation to safety, environmental quality, affordability, and meaningful provision for teenagers and young people.

5.10.8. Young people – Craigmount High School

The focus group with S4 pupils at Craigmount High School explored themes relating to play, recreation, local places, safety, and the use of outdoor spaces.

Recreation

Participants frequently associated their favourite activities with spending time with friends, including football, walking, going to town, attending the gym, and playing video games. Activities were often described less in terms of “play” and more as opportunities to “have fun”, socialise, and spend time independently or with peers.

Football and gym-related activities emerged as particularly important recreational activities for this age group. Participants also described informal activities such as walking, visiting parks, or spending time in “wilder spaces”. When weather conditions were poor, social activities tended to move indoors, often to friends’ houses.

Outdoor spaces and local environment

Participants generally described their local area positively, particularly highlighting the availability of greenspaces and the balance between urban and natural environments. Safety was identified as one of the most valued aspects of the local area. Pupils also positively referred to transport links, especially the tram network, and access to shops and nearby destinations such as the Gyle, Cammo and Corstorphine Hill.

However, although greenspaces were viewed positively, some participants felt that these spaces could be “more interesting”, noting that some areas were “just fields”. This suggests a desire for more engaging and multifunctional outdoor environments that provide greater opportunities for recreation and social activity.

Lack of provision for teenagers

Young people identified a lack of activities and facilities specifically aimed at teenagers. Participants expressed a desire for more places to eat, larger shopping areas, more entertainment opportunities, and improved gym facilities. References to “fun things to do” and amusement activities highlighted the importance of recreational destinations and social spaces beyond traditional playground provision. Sports provision, particularly football facilities, was also discussed positively, with participants referring to the availability of “Astro places” and football opportunities.

Safety

Safety emerged as an important theme influencing where young people spend time. Participants reported that they often stayed local because they felt safe in those areas, although some also travelled into the city centre for shopping and social activities. Going out alone was generally less popular, with most activities taking place with friends or occasionally family members.

Summary

The engagement highlighted the importance of accessible greenspaces, opportunities for social interaction, and recreational facilities for older children and young people. Participants valued the availability of nearby natural spaces, good transport connections, and feelings of safety within their local area. However, young people also expressed a desire for more engaging outdoor environments, improved recreational opportunities, and facilities better suited to teenagers, including social spaces, sports provision, entertainment opportunities, and places to spend time with friends.

The findings suggest that, for older children and young people, play and recreation extend beyond traditional playground provision and include informal social activities, sports participation, independent mobility, and access to multifunctional spaces that support social connection and wellbeing. Safety and accessibility were identified as important factors influencing how and where young people spend time outdoors.

5.10.9. Young people – Queensferry High School

The engagement highlighted that children and young people make extensive use of a wide range of outdoor spaces across Queensferry and the surrounding area, including parks, greenspaces, beaches, informal natural areas, and community spaces. Frequently used locations included the Hub, Echline Park, Inchcolm Park, Burgess Park, King George V Park, Port Edgar, local beaches, the High Street, and informal spaces such as the Vat Run, Ferry Glen, Teletubby Land, and the Hill on South Scotstoun. Some pupils also referred to destinations outside Queensferry, including Hopetoun House and Dalmeny Park.

Outdoor spaces

Participants generally valued outdoor spaces for opportunities to walk, socialise, play sports, explore nature, and spend time with friends. Several spaces were described positively as active community hubs, particularly Echline Park and the Hub, which were recognised for their play equipment, sports facilities, and community atmosphere. Informal natural spaces such as the Vat Run and the Hill were also valued for imaginative and informal play opportunities, including biking, den building, walking, and forest school activities.

However, participants also identified a range of concerns relating to the quality, accessibility, and safety of outdoor spaces. Littering, dog fouling, overflowing bins, broken glass, vaping, drinking, and drug-related activity were recurring themes throughout the engagement. Particular concerns were raised regarding the Ferry Glen, Ferry Muir, Top Shops, and some greenspaces where pupils reported feeling unsafe or unwelcome. Poor lighting and dark routes were also identified as barriers affecting perceptions of safety and accessibility.

The findings also highlighted differences between age groups and locations. Younger children were more likely to use outdoor parks and greenspaces regularly, while older pupils increasingly used cafés and shops as social spaces. Pupils from Queensferry generally felt there were sufficient places to spend time outdoors, whereas pupils from Kirkliston reported fewer opportunities and activities for teenagers. Several participants also expressed a desire for more facilities and outdoor spaces specifically aimed at older children and young people, including shelters, social spaces, and age-appropriate recreational opportunities.

Summary

Overall, the findings demonstrate that outdoor spaces play an important role in supporting play, recreation, social interaction, physical activity, and wellbeing for children and young people. However, improvements to maintenance, cleanliness, lighting, safety, and provision for teenagers were identified as important opportunities to enhance the quality and inclusiveness of outdoor spaces across Queensferry.

5.10.10. Young people – Drummond High School

The focus group with pupils from Drummond High School (S2 to S5) explored their use and views of outdoor spaces across Edinburgh.

Outdoor spaces

Young people described spaces that felt “special” largely because they were associated with comfort, family, friendships, fun, peace, and positive memories. Favourite places included both indoor and outdoor settings such as bedrooms, bookshops, beaches, football pitches, Holyrood Park, Portobello Beach, and Newhaven Harbour.

Natural spaces and parks were particularly associated with relaxation and peacefulness, opportunities to socialise, physical activity, nostalgia and emotional attachment. For example: “Holyrood Park – a place I used to go every day when it was Covid, I have nice memories.”

Use of public spaces

Young people described spending time in: the Meadows, Princes Street, St James Centre, Water of Leith, football pitches, McDonald’s at Meadowbank, and simply “walking around town”.

The findings suggest that informal socialising is one of the main functions of outdoor spaces for teenagers. Activities centred around: meeting friends, chatting,

walking around shops, sitting together, and “hanging around”. Importantly, young people highlighted the lack of seating and social infrastructure: “There are not enough benches around.” Participants expressed a preference for: circular benches, picnic-style seating, sheltered gathering spaces, and places specifically designed to support social interaction.

Safety

Concerns included: darkness and poor lighting, antisocial behaviour, harassment²⁷, intimidating groups, unsafe cycling behaviour, lack of activity in spaces, and feeling unwelcome as teenagers. Young people identified several improvements that would make spaces feel safer: better lighting, cleaner environments, less litter and dog fouling, more people using spaces, and more activities for teenagers.

Lack of provision for teenagers

Respondents felt that Edinburgh provides more opportunities for younger children than for teenagers. They stated that there were: “not enough things to do”, limited organised activities for teenagers, few welcoming spaces for teenagers, and insufficient recreational infrastructure.

The discussion identified barriers to sports participation, including lack of free football pitches, restricted access to facilities, lack of badminton and volleyball provision, and lack of access to equipment.

To overcome these barriers, suggestions included: free activities for teenagers, more youth-focused events, sheltered meeting spaces, more sports provision, and better access to recreational equipment. One particularly innovative suggestion was: “*have boxes/lockers that you can lock and unlock with an app and retrieve the equipment.*”

Environmental quality

Litter, dog fouling, rundown buildings, and poorly maintained environments were also mentioned during the discussion. Teenagers wished for: no litter, no crime, safer spaces, more toilets, and better social spaces for teenagers.

²⁷ Please refer to Teenager Girls’ perspective for more details.

Summary

The focus group findings demonstrate that children and young people place significant value on informal outdoor spaces for socialising, relaxation, physical activity, and emotional wellbeing. Parks, beaches, football pitches, and town centre spaces play an important role in supporting social connection and positive memories. However, participants identified several barriers affecting their ability to fully access and enjoy these spaces.

Key concerns included safety, poor lighting, antisocial behaviour, lack of seating and shelter, environmental quality issues. Young people consistently expressed the view that there are fewer opportunities, activities, and spaces available for older age groups compared to younger children. Overall, the discussion suggests that while Edinburgh offers a strong network of valued outdoor spaces, there are important gaps in provision for teenagers, particularly in relation to informal social spaces, youth-focused activities, safety, and equitable access to recreation opportunities.

5.10.11 – Parents – Young Mothers

The engagement session with young mothers at The Citadel Youth Centre explored experiences of parks, playgrounds and outdoor play provision for young children across Edinburgh

Importance of local play provision

Mother discussed the importance of having playgrounds close to home. All participants reported having access to a playground within five minutes of where they lived, highlighting the importance of local neighbourhood provision for families with young children and toddlers. However, participants also noted that smaller local playgrounds do not always provide enough variety or challenge to sustain children's interest for long periods:

Participants identified several parks positively (not necessary their local playgrounds) including Keddies Gardens, Leith Links, the Meadows, Princes Street Gardens, Saughton Park. Spaces such as the Meadows were valued for adventurous and physically challenging features.

Safety

Participants described concerns regarding antisocial behaviour, intimidating behaviour from teenagers and lack of maintenance within parks.

Comments included: "lots of antisocial behaviour in the parks "," teenagers 'hog' some of the equipment (e.g. swings) and do not let the little ones have a turn". For these young mothers there was a feeling of having to be in alert while using the parks. They referred anecdotal episodes of people taking videos of children, suggesting the incorporation of CCTV in parks to record any incidents. They also mentioned environmental safety concerns including broken glass, dog fouling and discarded needles.

The findings suggest that perceptions of safety are shaped by both social behaviour and environmental quality, and that these factors significantly influence how comfortable families feel using outdoor spaces.

Maintenance and facilities

Following on the discussion of dangerous litter in the parks, they also discussed the maintenance and long-term upkeep of both parks and playgrounds. Regarding the formal areas of play, they highlighted the broken equipment and delays in repairs. While in parks, they mentioned the declining environmental quality.

Respondents mentioned the need for more benches, more shelter, better fencing, safer gates, and equipment that supports both adults and children playing together. They highlighted the need for more varied and inclusive play equipment.

The importance of toilets was repeatedly emphasised, especially when out with young children: "*lack of toilets – always need to think about where to stop for children to use the loo*"

Participants valued: grassy areas, shade, enclosed spaces, and safer boundaries and the importance of more varied and equipment for different ages. Hammock swings were given as an example of a flexible equipment for different age groups.

Need for More Provision for Teenagers

Although the session focused on mothers and toddlers, participants repeatedly highlighted the lack of provision for older children and teenagers. Participants felt that insufficient youth provision contributes to conflict within playgrounds.

Therefore, some suggestion included separate spaces for teenagers, more youth services, community centre activities, and revival of play ranger programmes.

Summary

The focus group with young mothers highlighted the importance of accessible local parks and playgrounds in supporting families with young children. Participants valued having playgrounds close to home and identified several positive parks across Edinburgh.

Safety was important, with mothers describing concerns relating to antisocial behaviour, teenagers dominating equipment, broken glass, dog fouling and other environmental hazards. Maintenance of the spaces was also highlighted as a priority.

The findings highlighted the importance of family-friendly infrastructure including toilets, benches, shelter, enclosed spaces and equipment suitable for different ages providing opportunities for parents and children to play together.

Participants felt that better youth provision, activities and dedicated spaces for teenagers could improve experiences for both young people and families using parks.

Overall, the findings highlight that play sufficiency for families with young children depends not only on proximity of provision, but also on quality, safety, maintenance, inclusiveness and the availability of welcoming spaces that support both children and carers.

Parents – Parents of children with additional support needs

The focus group with parents of children with Additional Support Needs (ASN) explored the barriers families experience when accessing outdoor spaces and play opportunities.

Visiting outdoor spaces and planning

One of the strongest themes throughout the discussion was the level of preparation required before visiting outdoor spaces. Parents described needing to be organised, flexible and aware of past negative experiences that could trigger distress or dysregulation. Families explained that decisions about visiting outdoor spaces are shaped by questions such as: “can we get there?”, “can we play there?”, “can we stay there?” and “can we do that safely?” The findings suggest that accessibility extends beyond physical access and also includes emotional safety, predictability and confidence that spaces will support children’s needs.

Quiet, calm and regulating environments

Parents highlighted the importance of quieter and less overstimulating environments, including quiet routes, smaller spaces and greenspaces that support walking and regulation. Participants discussed the need to balance opportunities for exploration and independence while avoiding sensory overload. Calm spaces, retreat areas and opportunities for solo or peripheral play were viewed as particularly important. The findings suggest that sensory regulation and emotional wellbeing are central considerations for many ASN families when accessing outdoor environments.

Sensory environment

Sensory experiences emerged as one of the strongest themes throughout the session. Parents discussed noise, lighting, crowding, visual stimulation and unpredictability as key factors influencing whether spaces feel accessible. Concerns included overstimulation, poor noise control, and a lack of places where children could regulate their emotions. The findings suggest that sensory accessibility should be considered a core part of inclusive play design rather than an additional feature.

Safety

Safety concerns were another dominant theme. Parents repeatedly highlighted concerns about children running away, getting lost, traffic, dogs, and difficulties supervising safely in open environments. Enclosed spaces, higher fencing, clear lines of sight and controlled entrances were considered especially important. The

findings suggest that many ASN families require environments that balance freedom and independence with containment, predictability and supervision.

Inclusive design

Parents discussed the need for more genuinely inclusive and universal approaches to play space design. Participants emphasised the importance of inclusive play, accessible infrastructure and integrating accessibility from the outset. Suggestions included accessible swings, disabled parking and supportive equipment such as straps and handholds. Parents also highlighted that inclusive design should move beyond tokenistic features and instead support a wider range of ways of playing, interacting and regulating.

Need for facilities and lack of ANS provision

Supporting infrastructure was identified as another important issue. Parents highlighted the lack of shelter, limited facilities nearby and difficulties accessing outdoor play during poor weather. Participants discussed the importance of nearby facilities and community spaces that could support families if children needed to regulate emotions or seek shelter.

Parents discussed the limited availability of ASN-specific opportunities and the barriers to accessing existing provision, including unsuitable schedules, affordability, and a lack of local opportunities. Some parents also noted that highly sports-focused parks may unintentionally exclude some ASN children. The findings highlight the need for more varied, flexible and locally accessible play opportunities that support a wider range of interests, abilities and sensory needs.

Summary

The focus group highlighted that outdoor play experiences for children with Additional Support Needs are shaped by sensory, emotional, social and physical factors. Parents emphasised the importance of quieter, less overstimulating

environments, safe, enclosed spaces, improved sensory accessibility, and genuinely inclusive design.

The findings also identified significant gaps in current provision, including limited ASN-specific opportunities, lack of shelter and insufficient inclusive infrastructure. Overall, parents highlighted the need for more universal and flexible approaches to outdoor play that support different sensory, emotional and physical needs.

5.11. Additional Data

This section describes the main findings of the dissertations undertaken by the master students from the Landscape and Wellbeing Master programme at University of Edinburgh.

5.11.1. Teenagers' use of parks²⁸

The main findings of the dissertation reveal that teenagers in Edinburgh's urban parks overwhelmingly engaged in social, group-based activities over solitary ones, with the type of space strongly shaping their behaviours. Skate parks supported a mix of sport and socialisation, while ball courts were dominated by male users, and grassed spaces and paths offer more open, inclusive opportunities for socialising and leisure. There were pronounced gender differences: boys engaged in high-intensity activities, especially in skateparks and ball courts, whereas girls gravitate toward socially oriented open spaces, engaging in group gatherings or participating in activities like tennis and volleyball and group gatherings. Age also played a role, with younger teenagers more active in group sports and playgrounds, and older teenagers preferring autonomy or independent activities

5.11.2. Risky play²⁹

The study found that the design of playgrounds plays a significant role in shaping children's opportunities for risky play. Play spaces that include challenging features

²⁸ B276001 (2025). 'Gathering' and 'Separating' in Urban Parks: Exploring Teenagers' Outdoor Play Preferences in Different Playgrounds. Master's dissertation.

²⁹ B272382 (2025). Risky Play and Wellbeing in Edinburgh: Observations of Children Aged 2–6 and Parental Attitudes to Playground Design. Master's dissertation.

such as climbing structures, zip lines, natural elements, rocks, sand, and water encouraged children to test their abilities, build confidence, and engage in exploration. However, the research also found that most urban playgrounds are designed with a strong focus on safety, resulting in limited opportunities for higher levels of challenge and adventure. Conversely, most parents supported appropriate risky play and felt that many playgrounds are overly cautious. The study concluded that future playground design should achieve a better balance between safety and challenge, providing diverse, inclusive, and stimulating environments that support children's wellbeing and development.

6. Summary and Key Findings

Quantity of formal outdoor play spaces

- There are 205 playgrounds distributed across the entirety of the local authority area. The City of Edinburgh Council owns and manages 159 of these playgrounds.
- In addition to playgrounds, there are 91 formal sports/play facilities (e.g. MUGAs, wheels parks, outdoor gyms), contributing to a broader play network of formal areas of play.
- Overall, there are 296 formal play spaces, indicating a strong baseline level of provision across the city.
- However, specialist facilities (e.g. skateparks, climbing infrastructure) are relatively limited in number, particularly for older age groups.

Quantity of informal outdoor play spaces

- There is a rich network of greenspaces that offer play opportunities. Informal areas play include open grass spaces, woodlands, parks, coastal areas, regional parks, river corridors, and other pockets of unstructured environments.
- In 2025 there were 142 parks within the council area.
- Children and young people valued outdoor spaces outside the formal play provision.

Quality of formal outdoor play spaces

- More than half of the playgrounds have a fair play value.
- There is a very limited number of playgrounds that have a very good or excellent value.
- Residents often perceive formal play spaces as having poor maintenance, ageing or broken equipment.
- Uneven distribution of higher play value provision across the local authority, with some wards having a higher deficiency.
- Safety concerns, including poor lighting and antisocial behaviour influence how children and young people perceive and use outdoor spaces.

- Provision for older children and teenagers was identified as a significant gap.
- Older children and teenagers identified the need for more social spaces, sport facilities, more activities, and informal gathering spaces.
- Teenage girls highlighted the lack of spaces designed for social interaction, shelter and activities beyond football.
- Residents expressed a need for more varied play opportunities, particularly for older children and teenagers.

Quality of informal outdoor play spaces

- Residents value the variety of green and natural spaces such as woodlands, beach, rivers, parks.
- The majority of residents reported being happy or very happy with the quality of green and natural spaces in their local area.
- However, maintenance issues, including litter, dog fouling, overflowing bins and environmental cleanliness, were frequently highlighted as areas for improvement.
- The overall quality of parks across the local authority is considered good
- Children and young people valued many of the natural spaces.
- Safety and perceptions of antisocial behaviour also influence how some residents use informal outdoor spaces.

Accessibility of formal outdoor play spaces

- The majority of residents have access to at least good play value provision.
- Access to very good or excellent play provision is more limited across the city.
- Local playgrounds and opportunities within walking distance of home are valued by children, young people and families.

- Most parents and carers reported living within a 20-minute walk, wheel or cycle of a playground.
- Active travel, including walking, wheeling, cycling and scooting, is an important way children and young people access outdoor spaces.

Accessibility of informal outdoor play spaces

- Accessibility to outdoor space is very important for children and young people
- The majority of parents/cares live within 20 minutes of a greenspace that they visit frequently.
- Informal greenspaces close to home are important in supporting regular outdoor play, independent mobility and everyday recreation.
- Children and young people frequently access outdoor spaces by walking, cycling or wheeling.

Access and inclusion

- Provision of at least two high play value opportunities suitable for users with mobility aids is very limited across the local authority.
- Provision of Changing Places toilets is very limited.
- Provision of quiet or enclosed spaces that support sensory regulation and neurodiverse children and young people is limited.
- Wayfinding and accessible signage are largely absent from outdoor play spaces.
- Residents and stakeholders identified the need for more inclusive and universal design approaches across both formal and informal outdoor spaces.
- Accessible surfacing, wheelchair-accessible equipment, communication boards, sensory play opportunities and accessible seating were identified as key priorities.
- Children and young people with additional support needs often experience barriers relating to sensory overload, safety, predictability and accessibility of facilities.
- Inclusive play opportunities are perceived as inconsistent across the city.

Further points

- Children and young people value opportunities for adventurous, flexible and nature-based play, including climbing, exploring, socialising and spending time in informal spaces.
- Access to outdoor play opportunities is influenced not only by quantity of provision, but also by perceptions of safety, maintenance, inclusiveness, environmental quality and comfort.
- Shelter, seating, toilets and supporting infrastructure were consistently identified as important features that encourage longer and more inclusive use of outdoor spaces.
- There is strong demand for more opportunities and spaces specifically designed for teenagers.
- Sensory accessibility and quieter regulating spaces are important considerations for many children and young people, particularly those with Additional Support Needs (ASN).
- Importance of inclusive and universal design approaches that integrate accessibility throughout spaces rather than as separate “add-on” features.
- Maintenance and environmental quality strongly influence how spaces are perceived and used. Issues such as litter, dog fouling, broken equipment and vandalism were raised consistently across engagement groups.
- Weather-responsive design, including shelter, lighting and year-round usability, was identified as particularly important in supporting continued use of outdoor spaces across different seasons and changing climate.
- Children and young people value places that are fun.

7. Next steps

- The Play Sufficiency Assessment will be shared with those who took part in the consultation. A child friendly version will be created.
- The Play Sufficiency Assessment will be submitted as part of the Evidence Report and inform the next Local Development Plan (City Plan 2040).
- The Play Sufficiency Assessment can be aligned with the work done for the Open Space Strategy to support wider benefits in terms of potential places for play.
- The Play Sufficiency Assessment will be used to inform the next Play Action Plan.

Appendix 1 - Case Studies

What does playground with a play value of Excellent look like?

Saughton Park's playground



Saughton Park playground is one of Edinburgh's most attractive play spaces and is an example of a playground with a play value of Excellent. Located within Saughton Park, in the west of the city, the playground was developed as part of the park's major restoration project, creating a high-quality destination for children, young people and families from across Edinburgh.

Opened in 2018, the playground cost approximately £421,000 to deliver. It caters for a wide range of age groups, from toddlers to teenagers and it provides diverse opportunities for physical, social, imaginative and sensory play. Children and young people can climb, balance, swing, slide, glide, jump, spin, crawl, rock, explore music, play with sand, engage in social activities and use imaginative play, supporting different interests, abilities and stages of development.

The playground was designed as a playground for all, making it accessible and inclusive for children and young people of all abilities. The playground includes a range of accessible and inclusive features such as flush to ground roundabout (wheelchair accessible), trampolines, a high back swing and musical instruments. The network of tarmac paths allows wheelchair access to all areas. A variety of surfaces, open grassed areas, plants and mature trees create a rich play environment that offers sensory experiences, shade and shelter throughout the site. Seating areas and picnic tables allow the space to be welcoming and comfortable for families and carers.

Saughton Park's playground benefits from being within a larger park setting the landscape that includes formal gardens, greenhouse, sports facilities, skatepark, café, toilets (including changing places facilities), parking (dedicated parking spaces suitable for vehicles with side and rear ramps), community spaces and the Water of Leith.



What does playground with a play value of Very Good look like?

West Prince Street Garden's playground

The playground at West Princes Street Gardens is a play space located in the heart of Edinburgh's World Heritage Site, beneath the iconic backdrop of Edinburgh Castle. Situated within the historic Princes Street Gardens, the playground has a small footprint, but it caters for both local families and visitors to the city.

The play area was redesigned and reopened in 2024. The redevelopment represented an investment of approximately £330,000 and replaced the previous ageing play equipment. The new design sought to retain the much-loved castle theme, while introducing new opportunities for play, exploration and challenge.

A large play unit features a 9 metre high castle tower with climbing nets, slides, rope bridges, monkey bars, climbing walls and opportunities for imaginative play. A separate smaller castle structure provides play experiences for younger children, including smaller slides, climbing features and interactive play panels. Additional elements such as swings, balancing features and role-play opportunities encourage social interaction, creativity and physical activity.



The redesign also sought to improve inclusivity for a wider range of needs and abilities. This includes accessible swing, inclusive seesaw, wheelchair accessible roundabout, musical play items and low-level play panels.

The play area caters for different ages and abilities and is located close to accessible paths, seating, toilets and café facilities within the gardens. The playground is surrounded by mature trees, that offer shade and shelter.

Its central location and proximity to public transport make it one of Edinburgh's most visited destination playgrounds.

The project provides an example of how destination playgrounds can combine imaginative play, physical challenge in a heritage site within a highly restricted urban setting.



What does playground with a play value of Good look like?

Buttercup Farm Park playground

Buttercup Farm playground is located within Buttercup Farm Park in Drumbrae and opened in 2014. It is situated on the site of the former Drumbrae Primary School playing fields in Corstorphine.

The playground provides a diverse range of play opportunities for children of different ages. It includes a separate fenced toddler area, a junior play area, accessible pathways, seating and picnic areas, open grass areas, and informal natural spaces.

The toddler area, offer opportunity for children to climb, slide, play with interactive panels, rock and swing (including two cradle seats). The graphics of the safety surface encourage imagination and physical play.



The junior area has a trampoline and a large multi-activity piece of equipment. Children can explore the play equipment in different ways, with opportunities to climb, balance, crawl, slide, engage in role play, and socialise. The junior area is not fenced but it is partly enclosed by a hedge, helping to define the space while allowing children to move freely between formal and informal areas of play.



Liberton Park playground

Liberton Park playground located within Liberton Park in South Edinburgh. The playground is situated within a larger park that is also used for informal recreation.

The playground primarily caters for toddlers and junior aged children. There is an accessible path leading to the playground's entrance, and the play area is fully enclosed by a fence. There is no shade or shelter, and the playground is very exposed; however, it benefits from good lines of sight. Although the playground is surrounded by green space, there are no natural elements inside the fenced play area.

The playground includes four pieces of equipment: swings of different formats (including two cradle seats and a nest swing), a spring rocker, a nest carousel, and a multi-activity play structure. Together, these provide a range of play experiences such as swinging, rocking, climbing, balancing, spinning, sliding, and interactive game panels. There are also opportunities for social play and role play in the large piece of equipment. and social play. There are two benches inside the playground; however, neither provide back support.



Supporting elements outside the playground include benches (with arms and back support), a picnic table with a game tabletop (featuring snakes and ladder game), and some outdoor gym equipment.

What does playground with a play value of Fair look like?

Sandport Street

Sandport Street playground is a neighbourhood playground located in Leith. It is well positioned within walking distance from homes, other local amenities and public transport.

The playground was installed in 2010 and is modest in size. It is surrounded by mature trees that provide shade and shelter and bordered by an area of grass, proving opportunities for informal play. The space is fully enclosed by a fence.



The playground provides play opportunities for both toddlers and junior aged children. The main play structure promotes climbing, balancing, sliding, spinning, a small hut for shelter that encourages social interaction and imaginative play. For younger children, there is a multi-user spring rocker, while the swing set can be used by children of different ages. The playground also includes a talking tube, providing opportunity to play with sound.

Supporting facilities include a bench without back support, and a litter bin.

The safety surface is loose fill bark mulch, which can reduce accessibility for some users, particularly those using wheelchairs or other mobility aids.

Wester Hailes Drive Barn Park Crescent

The Wester Hailes Drive Barn Park Crescent is located in the Wester Hailes neighbourhood. It is located in the middle of a residential area, surrounded by housing, parking, and a local road.



The playground is very modest in size and consists of a single play unit, incorporating a slide, climbing net and a platform, supporting a range of physical play opportunities such as climbing, balancing and sliding.

The space is fully enclosed by a metal fence, provides seating with back support. It is wheelchair accessible with a rubber safety surface. However, the playground has limited supporting features, and the equipment shows signs of wear.

Due to its small size, the playground offers limited range opportunities and does not cater for children of different ages (e.g. toddlers) and abilities. There are no opportunities for swinging, spinning, rocking, gliding or social play (e.g. a hut).

Magdalene Glen Toddlers

The Magdalene Glen Toddlers playground is a small playground located within Magdalene Glen in the east of Edinburgh.

The playground is designed specifically for younger children. It features a central multi-play structure with modular platforms, an integrated slide and connecting bridges, providing play opportunities such for climbing, balancing and slide. In addition, there are balancing play elements dotted around and a multiuser spring rocker. The playground has a wet pour safety surface with colourful patterns and playful elements that add visual interest.



The space is fully enclosed by a metal fence creating a separated space for children.

A Fair play value reflects the focus on specific younger age groups, the small size and the limited variety of opportunities.

Appendix 2 – Audit tools

Play Value Tool

Play value points are based on provision for children and young people aged 0-6, 6-8, 8-14 and site factors.

Age groups 8-14 do not score for sand or water.

Points for each age group are awarded for play areas which provide:

Area	Method of score
Balancing	1 per age range
Climbing	2 per age range
Crawling	1 per age range (tunnel)
Gliding	1 per age range
Group swinging	1 per age range
Single swinging	1 per seat maximum 2 per age range
Jumping	1 per age range
Rotating single/twin	1 per item max 2 per age range
Rotating multiuser	2 per age range
Rocking (see saw or springer)	1 per item max 3 per age range
Slide	1 per item max 3 per age range
Sliding other	1 per item max 2 per age range
Problem solving / games	1 per item max 2 per age range
Sandpits	2 per age range
Sand play	1 per age range
Water play	2 per age range
Social Play	2 per age range, child seat/hut
Viewing Platforms	1 per age range
Special needs	2 per age range
Ground Graphics	max 2 per play area
Sound items	max 2 per age range
Ball Play Area	max 2 per play area

Wheel Play Area	max 2 per play area
Sunny / Shade	1 mixed
Sheltered	1 present
Noise Pollution	1 for none
Traffic Pollution	1 for none
Ground Contouring	2 significant 1 limited
Visual Appeal	2 attractive 1 average
Environmental Planting	1 if present
Shrub / Tree Planting	1 if present
Equipment Layout	2 good 1 average
Vehicle Safety	1 for signs, crossings, barriers
Water Safety	1 if safe
Self-Closing Gates	1 per play area
Play Challenge item	2 per play area
Overhead Powerline Safety	1 if not present
Site Condition	1 if free from problems
Informal Adult Supervision	4 excellent 3 good 2 average 1 poor
Child seating	1 per area
Adult seating	1 per area
Internal Paths	1 per area
Lighting	1 per area
Fencing	1 per area
Signs	1 per play area
Bins	1 per play area
Bicycle Stands	1 per play area
Vehicular Gates	1 per play area

Accessibility and inclusivity play space checklist³⁰:

Item	Yes	No	Partly
Wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/ rest sites			
Hard surface access to all pieces of equipment/ rest sites			
Wayfinding/accessible signage to enable navigation through the space			
Provision of accessible sheltered/shaded areas			
Provision of quiet/enclosed spaces to address sensory sensitivity			
Provision of wide, hard surface and flush access routes into play space			
Provision of a Changing Places toilet			
Parking facilities suitable for vehicles with side and rear ramps			
Clearly marked and safe walkways between disabled parking bays and play space entrance			
Flush transitions on all nearby kerbs and transition points			
Provision of at least two high value play opportunities suitable for users with mobility aids (e.g. Wide slides/ roundabout/high backed swing)			

³⁰ Adapted from Play Space Accessibility and Inclusivity Assessment (Play Scotland)

Appendix 3 – Audits

Play Values – Council owned playgrounds

Table 5 – Play Values of playgrounds assessed in 2025 owned and managed by City of Edinburgh Council

Site name	Play Value
Admiralty Street	Fair
Allison Public Park	Good
Ardshiel Avenue Torrence Park	Fair
Bailie Place Play Area (rear Nos 1-5)	Fair
Balgreen	Fair
Barony Place	Good
Bingham Park	Fair
Blackford Pond	Fair
Bloomiehall	Good
Boswall-Royston Main Gardens	Fair
Braidburn Valley	Fair
Braidburn Valley Toddler	Fair
Broomhouse Grove & Sports Pitch	Fair
Broughton Road Play Area	Good
Buckstone Circle	Good
Burdiehouse Teenage	Fair
Buttercup Farm	Good
Calder Park	Good
Campbell Park	Fair
Carlowrie Crescent Dalmeny	Good
Clermiston Public Park	Good
Clovenstone Gardens	Good

Site name	Play Value
Clovenstone Park - Block 40	Fair
Colinton Mains	Good
Craigievar Square	Fair
Craigmillar Jubilee Public	Fair
Craigpark Ratho	Fair
Cramond Walled Garden	Good
Crewe Road Gardens Play Area	Fair
Dalmeny Street	Good
Dalry Community	Good
Davidson Mains Public	Good
Dean Park Place (Balerno)	Good
Dolphin Gardens West	Fair
Drum Park Avenue	Good
Dumbeg Park	Fair
Dumbiedykes	Good
Dumbryden Gardens No 1 to16	Fair
Dumbryden Gardens No 46	Fair
Dumbryden Grove	Fair
Dundas Avenue	Good
East Pilton Park Play Area	Good
Easter Drylaw Drive	Good
Echline Avenue Queensferry	Very Good
Fairmilehead Public	Good
Falcon Road	Good
Fauldburn Park	Good
Ferniehill Road	Good
Figgate Public Park	Very Good
Forth Terrace Dalmeny	Fair

Site name	Play Value
Glendevon	Fair
Glenvarloch Crescent	Fair
Gracemount House Drive	Good
Gracemount Leisure Centre	Fair
Granton Crescent	Fair
Granton Mains East	Fair
Greenacre	Fair
Gyle Public Park	Good
Hailes Quarry Public Park	Fair
Hailesland Gardens	Fair
Harrison Park East	Good
Harrison Park West	Good
Haugh Park	Good
Hawkhill Court Multi Storey	Fair
Henderson Gardens	Good
Hermiston Village	Fair
Inch Public	Very Good
Inchcolm Terrace Queensferry Play	Fair
Inverleith	Good
Jack Kane Centre	Good
Joppa Quarry	Good
Keddie Gardens	Very Good
King George V Eyre Place Jnr	Fair
King George V Eyre Place Senior	Good
King George V Park Farquhar Terr SQF	Good
Kingsknowe Place	Fair
Kirkliston Sports Centre	Fair
Leith Links	Excellent

Site name	Play Value
Liberton Public	Good
Lochend	Fair
Loganlea Avenue	Very Good
Magdalene Community Centre	Fair
Magdalene Glen Junior	Fair
Magdalene Glen Toddlers	Fair
Maitland Hog Lane Kirkliston	Fair
Marytree House	Very Good
Meadowfield Gardens (No 17)	Fair
Meadowfield Public	Good
Meadows Magnet Active	Excellent
Meadows Toddlers	Fair
Meggetland Wynd	Fair
Moat House	Fair
Montgomery Street	Very Good
Morningside Public	Very Good
Morvenside	Fair
Mount Lodge	Good
Muir Wood Road	Good
Muirhouse Linear Park	Good
Muirhouse View	Fair
Murieston	Good
Murrayburn Place Block 13	Fair
Newcraighall Public	Good
Niddrie House Drive (Clock)	Fair
Niddrie House Square	Fair
Northfield Community Centre	Fair
Northfield Drive	Good

Site name	Play Value
Northview Court	Fair
Old School Yard Dean Path	Fair
Oxgangs Brae	Good
Peffer Place	Fair
Peffermill Court	Good
Pentland View	Good
Pentland View Teenage	Fair
Piershill Square West	Good
Pilrig Park - Balfour Street	Good
Pilrig Park - Pilrig Street	Good
Pirniefeld Bank	Fair
Prestonfield Public	Good
Primrose Street	Fair
Ratho Public	Fair
Ratho Station	Good
Ravelston Park Play	Good
Redbraes	Fair
Redhall	Good
Riverside Public Park Newbridge	Good
Roseburn Murrayfield	Fair
Roseburn	Very Good
Rosefield Park	Good
Saltire Street	Fair
Sandport Street	Fair
Saughton Mains Terrace	Good
Saughton	Excellent
Seven Acre Public	Good
Sighthill Drive	Fair

Site name	Play Value
Sighthill	Good
Southouse Square	Good
Spylaw Public Park	Good
St Margaret's	Good
St Marks	Fair
Stenhouse Place East	Fair
Stewart Terrace	Fair
Straiton Place - Portobello	Good
Taylor Gardens	Fair
Tolbooth Wynd Leith	Fair
Towerbank - Portobello	Fair
Treverlen Park	Fair
Union Park	Good
Victoria - Juniors	Good
Victoria - Toddler	Fair
West Meadows	Good
West Pilton Public - Juniors	Good
West Pilton Public - Seniors	Good
West Princes Street Gardens	Very Good
Wester Hailes Drive Barn Park Cr 129	Fair
Wester Hailes Drive Barn Park Cr 21-23	Fair
Wester Hailes Park Block 20	Fair
Westfield Court	Fair
Westside Plaza	Fair
White Park	Fair

Play Values – Privately owned playgrounds

Table 6- Privately owned playgrounds' play values.

Site name	Play Value
Somerville Road Currie (P)	Good
Lennie Park (P)	Good
Meadowfield Park (P)	Good
Granton Gas Holder (P)	Good
Hawthorn Gardens (P)	Fair
Burnbrae Drive (P)	Good
Granton Mill Drive (P)	Fair
Granton Mill Crescent (P)	Good
Bonnybridge Drive (P)	Good
Nisbett Walk (P)	Fair
Pincott Park (P)	Fair
High Brae (P)	Fair
Lime Kilns (P)	Fair
Dreghorn Garden (P)	Good
Dreghorn Drive (P)	Very Good
Latch Park (P)	Good
Torwood (P)	Fair
Hillpark (P)	Fair
Cammo Meadows (P)	Good
Broomhills (P)	Good
Bowes Place (P)	Fair
Raith Park (P)	Fair
Cappela Gardens (P)	Fair
Castlebrae Rigg (P)	Fair
Kane Neuk (P)	Fair

Site name	Play Value
East Pilton Farm Wynd (P)	Fair
Orchard Brae Avenue (P)	Fair
Westfield Street (P)	Fair
Powderhall Rd (P)	Fair
Sovereign Ct, McDonald Road (P)	Fair
Albion Gardens (P)	Fair
Wauchope Avenue (P)	Fair
Niddrie Marischal Street (P)	Fair
Niddrie Marischal Garden (P)	Fair
Castlebrae Place (P)	Fair
Mounthooly Loan (P)	Fair
Gyle Centre 1 (P)	Fair
Gyle Centre 2 (P)	Fair
Duff Street (P)	Fair
Craighleith Retail Park (P)	Fair
Wharton Quare (P)	Fair
Eliston Road (P)	Fair
Crawford Green (P)	Fair
Whinny Row (P)	Fair
Morham Gait (P)	Fair
Margaret Rose (P)	Fair

Trends over time

The next table shows the comparison of play values between the 2015 and the 2025 audits, showing where there is an increase, no change or decrease in the playgrounds' play value.

In the time between the audits, of the currently 159 playgrounds owned and managed by the City of Edinburgh Council in 2025:

- 100 retain the same play value
- 22 increased in play value
- 23 decreased in play value
- 14 new playgrounds were added to the portfolio.

Overall, the comparison with the 2015 audits shows a largely stable picture, with most playgrounds maintaining their play value.

Playground	Ward	2015 Play Value	2025 Play Value	Trend between 2015 and 2025
Admiralty Street	Leith	Good	Fair	Decrease
Allison Public Park	Almond	Good	Good	Same
Ardshiel Avenue Torrence Park	Brum Brae/Gyle	Good	Fair	Decrease
Bailie Place (rear Nos 1-5)	Portobello/Craigmillar	Fair	Fair	Same
Balgreen	Corstorphine/Murrayfield	Fair	Fair	Same
Barony Place	City Centre	Very Good	Good	Decrease
Bingham Park	Portobello/Craigmillar	Fair	Fair	Same
Blackford Pond	Morningside	Fair	Fair	Same
Bloomiehall	Pentland Hills	Good	Good	Same
Boswall-Royston Main Gardens	Forth	Fair	Fair	Same
Braidburn Valley	Morningside	-	Fair	N/A
Braidburn Valley Toddler	Morningside	-	Fair	N/A
Broomhouse Grove & Sports Pitch	Sighthill/Gorgie	Good	Fair	Decrease
Broughton Road	Leith Walk	Good	Good	Same
Buckstone Circle	Colinton/Fairmilehead	Good	Good	Same
Burdiehouse Teenage	Liberton/Gilmerton	Good	Fair	Decrease
Buttercup Farm	Drum Brae/Gyle	Good	Good	Same
Calder Park	Pentland Hills	Good	Good	Same
Campbell Park	Colinton/Fairmilehead	Fair	Fair	Same
Carlowrie Crescent Dalmeny	Almond	Good	Good	Same
Clermiston Public Park	Drum Brae/Gyle	Good	Good	Same
Clovenstone Gardens	Pentland Hills	Fair	Good	Increase
Clovenstone Park - Block 40	Pentland Hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Colinton Mains	Colinton/Fairmilehead	Very Good	Good	Decrease
Craigievar Square	Drum Brae/Gyle	Good	Fair	Decrease
Craigmillar Jubilee Public	Southside / Newington	Good	Fair	Decrease
Craigpark Ratho	Pentland Hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Cramond Walled Garden	Almond	Good	Good	Same

Playground	Ward	2015 Play Value	2025 Play Value	Trend between 2015 and 2025
Crewe Road Gardens	Forth	-	Fair	N/A
Dalmeny Street	Leith Walk	Very Good	Good	Decrease
Dalry Community	Sighthill/Gorgie	Fair	Good	Increase
Davidson Mains Public	Almond	Good	Good	Same
Dean Park Place (Balerno)	Pentland Hills	Good	Good	Same
Dolphin Gardens West	Pentland Hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Drum Park Avenue	Liberton/Gilmerton	Fair	Good	Increase
Dumbeg Park	Pentland Hills	-	Fair	N/A
Dumbiedykes	City Centre	Fair	Good	Up
Dumbryden Gardens No 1 to16	Pentland Hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Dumbryden Gardens No 46	Pentland Hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Dumbryden Grove	Pentland Hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Dundas Avenue	Almond	Good	Good	Same
East Pilton Park	Forth	Good	Good	Same
Easter Drylaw Drive	Inverleith	Good	Good	Same
Echline Avenue South Queensferry	Almond	Very Good	Very Good	Same
Fairmilehead Public	Colinton/Fairmilehead	Good	Good	Same
Falcon Road	Morningside	Good	Good	Same
Fauldburn Park	Drum Brae/Gyle	Fair	Good	Increase
Ferniehill Road	Liberton/Gilmerton	Fair	Good	Increase
Figgate Public Park	Craigentinny / Duddingston	Good	Very Good	Increase
Forth Terrace Dalmeny	Almond	Fair	Fair	Same
Glendevon	Corstorphine / Murrayfield	Fair	Fair	Same
Glenvarloch Crescent	Liberton/Gilmerton	Fair	Fair	Same
Gracemount House Drive	Liberton/Gilmerton	Good	Good	Same
Gracemount Leisure Centre	Liberton / Gilmerton	Fair	Fair	Same
Granton Crescent	Forth	Fair	Fair	Same
Granton Mains East	Forth	Fair	Fair	Same
Greenacre	Pentland Hills	-	Fair	N/A
Gyle Public Park	Drum Brae/Gyle	Good	Good	Same

Play Sufficiency Assessment 2026

Playground	Ward	2015 Play Value	2025 Play Value	Trend between 2015 and 2025
Hailes Quarry Public Park	Sighthill/Gorgie	Good	Fair	Decrease
Hailesland Gardens	Pentland Hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Harrison Park East	Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart	Good	Good	Same
Harrison Park West	Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart	Good	Good	Same
Haugh Park	Almond	Good	Good	Same
Hawkhill Court Multi Storey	Craigtinny / Duddingston	-	Fair	N/A
Henderson Gardens	Leith	Good	Good	Same
Hermiston Village	Pentland Hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Inch Public	Southside/Newington	Good	Very Good	Increase
Inchcolm Terrace South Queensferry	Almond	Fair	Fair	Same
Inverleith	Inverleith	Very Good	Good	Decrease
Jack Kane Centre	Portobello/Craigmillar	Good	Good	Same
Joppa Quarry	Portobello/Craigmillar	Very Good	Good	Decrease
Keddie Gardens	Leith Walk	Fair	Very Good	Increase
King George V Eyre Place Jnr	Inverleith	Very Good	Fair	Decrease
King George V Eyre Place Senio	Inverleith	Very Good	Good	Decrease
King George V Park Farquhar Terr SQF	Almond	Fair	Good	Increase
Kingsknowe Place	Sighthill/Gorgie	Fair	Fair	Same
Kirkliston Sports Centre	Almond	Fair	Fair	Same
Leith Links Junior	Leith	Good	Excellent	Increase
Liberton Public	Liberton/Gilmerton	Good	Good	Same
Lochend	Craigtinny/Duddingston	Fair	Fair	Same
Loganlea Avenue	Craigtinny/Duddingston	Fair	Very Good	Increase
Magdalene Community Centre	Portobello/Craigmillar	Good	Fair	Decrease
Magdalene Glen Junior	Portobello/Craigmillar	-	Fair	N/A
Magdalene Glen Toddlers	Portobello/Craigmillar	-	Fair	N/A
Maitland Hog Lane Kirkliston	Almond	-	Fair	N/A
Marytree House	Liberton/Gilmerton	Good	Very Good	Increase
Meadowfield Gardens (No 17)	Craigtinny/Duddingston	Fair	Fair	Same
Meadowfield Public	Craigtinny/Duddingston	Good	Good	Same

Play Sufficiency Assessment 2026

Playground	Ward	2015 Play Value e	2025 Play Value	Trend between 2015 and 2025
Meadows Magnet Active	Southside/Newington	Excellent	Excellent	Same
Meadows Toddlers	Southside/Newington	Fair	Fair	Same
Meggetland Wynd	Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart	Fair	Fair	Same
Moat House	Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart	Fair	Fair	Same
Montgomery Street	Leith Walk	Good	Very Good	Increase
Morningside Public	Morningside	Good	Very Good	Increase
Morvenside	Pentland Hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Mount Lodge	Portobello/Craigmillar	Good	Good	Same
Muir Wood Road	Pentland Hills	Good	Good	Same
Muirhouse Linear Park	Almond	Good	Good	Same
Muirhouse View	Almond	Fair	Fair	Same
Murieston	Sighthill/Gorgie	Fair	Good	Increase
Murrayburn Place Block 13	Pentland Hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Newcraighall Public	Portobello/Craigmillar	Good	Good	Same
Niddrie House Drive (Clock)	Portobello/Craigmillar	Fair	Fair	Same
Niddrie House Square	Portobello/Craigmillar	Fair	Fair	Same
Northfield Community Centre	Craigentinny/Duddingston	Good	Fair	Decrease
Northfield Drive	Craigentinny/Duddingston	Good	Good	Same
Northview Court	Forth	Fair	Fair	Same
Old School Yard Dean Path	Inverleith	Fair	Fair	Same
Oxgangs Brae	Colinton/Fairmilehead	Fair	Good	Increase
Peffer Place	Portobello/Craigmillar	Fair	Fair	Same
Peffermill Court	Portobello/Craigmillar	Good	Good	Same
Pentland View	Pentland Hills	Good	Good	Same
Pentland View Teenage PP	Pentland Hills	-	Fair	N/A
Piershill Square East	Craigentinny/Duddingston	Good	Good	Same
Pilrig Park Balfour Street	Leith Walk	Fair	Good	Increase
Pilrig Park Pilrig Street	Leith Walk	Good	Good	Same
Pirniefield Bank	Leith	Fair	Fair	Same
Prestonfield Public	Southside/Newington	Good	Good	Same

Play Sufficiency Assessment 2026

Playground	Ward	2015 Play Value	2025 Play Value	Trend between 2015 and 2025
Primrose Street	Leith	Fair	Fair	Same
Ratho Public	Pentland Hills	Good	Fair	Decrease
Ratho Station	Almond	Good	Good	Same
Ravelston Park Play	Inverleith	Very Good	Good	Decrease
Redbraes	Leith Walk	Good	Fair	Decrease
Redhall	Sighthill/Gorgie	Good	Good	Same
Riverside Public Park Newbridge	Almond	Good	Good	Same
Roseburn Murrayfield	Corstorphine/Murrayfield	Fair	Fair	Same
Roseburn	Corstorphine/Murrayfield	-	Very Good	N/A
Rosefield Park	Portobello/Craigmillar	Good	Good	Same
Saltire Street	Forth	-	Fair	N/A
Sandport Street	Leith	Good	Fair	Decrease
Saughton Mains Terrace	Sighthill/Gorgie	Good	Good	Same
Saughton	Sighthill/Gorgie	Very Good	Excellent	Increase
Seven Acre Public	Liberton/Gilmerton	Good	Good	Same
Sighthill Drive	Sighthill/Gorgie	Fair	Fair	Same
Sighthill	Sighthill/Gorgie	Good	Good	Same
Southouse Square	Liberton/Gilmerton	Fair	Good	Increase
Spylaw Public Park	Colinton/Fairmilehead	Good	Good	Same
St Margaret's	Corstorphine / Murrayfield	Good	Good	Same
St Marks	Inverleith	Fair	Fair	Same
Stenhouse Place East	Sighthill/Gorgie	Fair	Fair	Same
Stewart Terrace	Sighthill/Gorgie	Fair	Fair	Same
Straiton Place Portobello	Portobello/Craigmillar	Good	Good	Same
Taylor Gardens	Leith	Fair	Fair	Same
Tolbooth Wynd Leith	Leith	Fair	Fair	Same
Towerbank Portobello	Portobello/Craigmillar	Good	Fair	Decrease
Trevelen Park	Portobello/Craigmillar	-	Fair	N/A
Union Park	Corstorphine/Murrayfield	Good	Good	Same
Victoria Juniors	Forth	Very Good	Good	Decrease

Playground	Ward	2015 Play Value	2025 Play Value	Trend between 2015 and 2025
Victoria Toddler	Forth	Fair	Fair	Same
West Meadows	Morningside	Good	Good	Same
West Pilton Public Juniors	Forth	Fair	Good	Increase
West Pilton Public Seniors	Forth	Fair	Good	Increase
West Princes Street Gardens	City Centre	Very Good	Very Good	Same
Wester Hailes Drive Barn Park Cr 129	Pentland hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Wester Hailes Drive Barn Park Cr 21-23	Pentland hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Wester Hailes Park Block 20	Pentland hills	Fair	Fair	Same
Westfield Court	Sighthill/Gorgie	Fair	Fair	Same
Westside Plaza	Pentland hills	-	Fair	N/A
White Park	Sighthill/Gorgie	Good	Fair	Decrease

Mapping

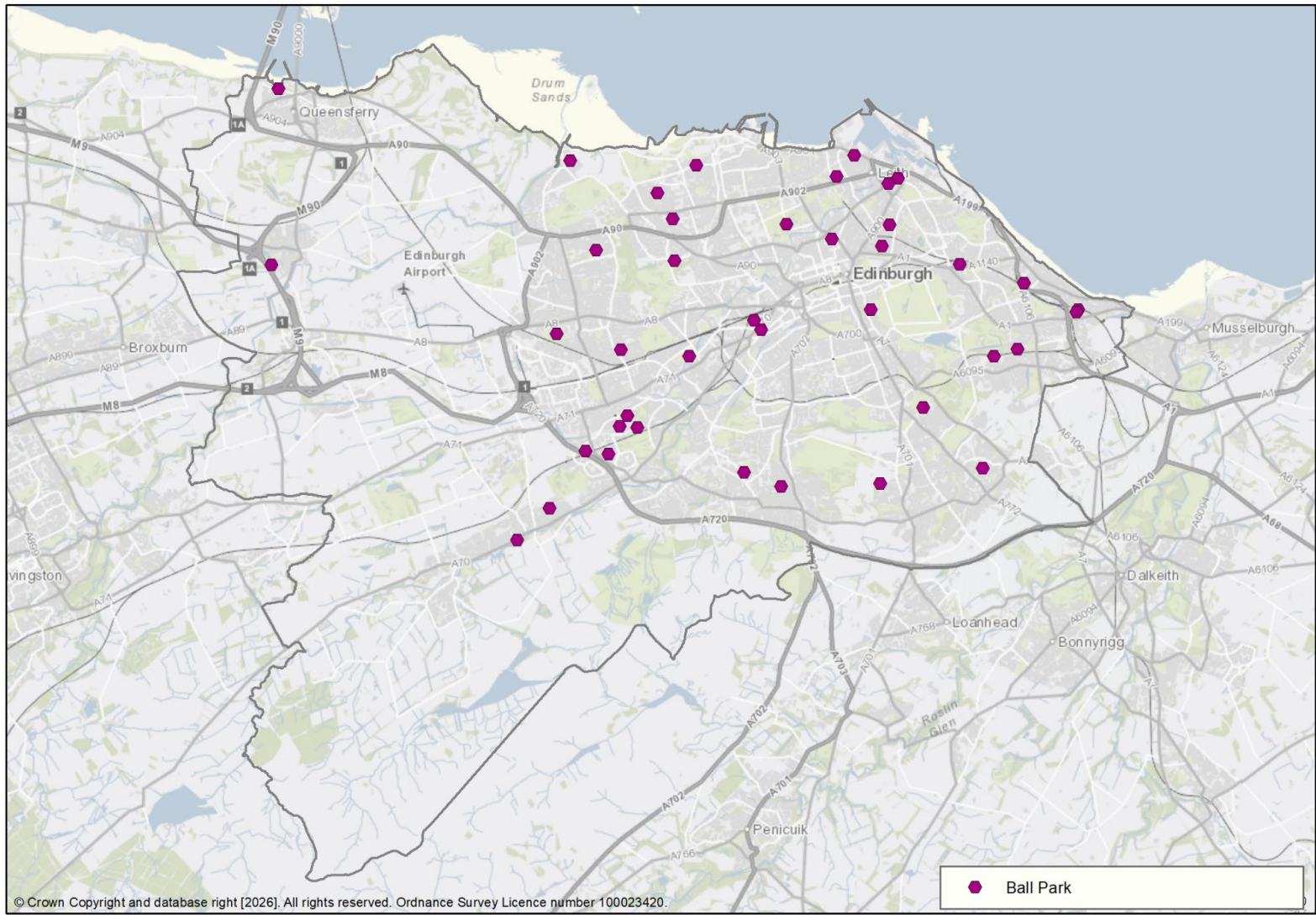


Figure 27- Map of the existing ball parks.

95

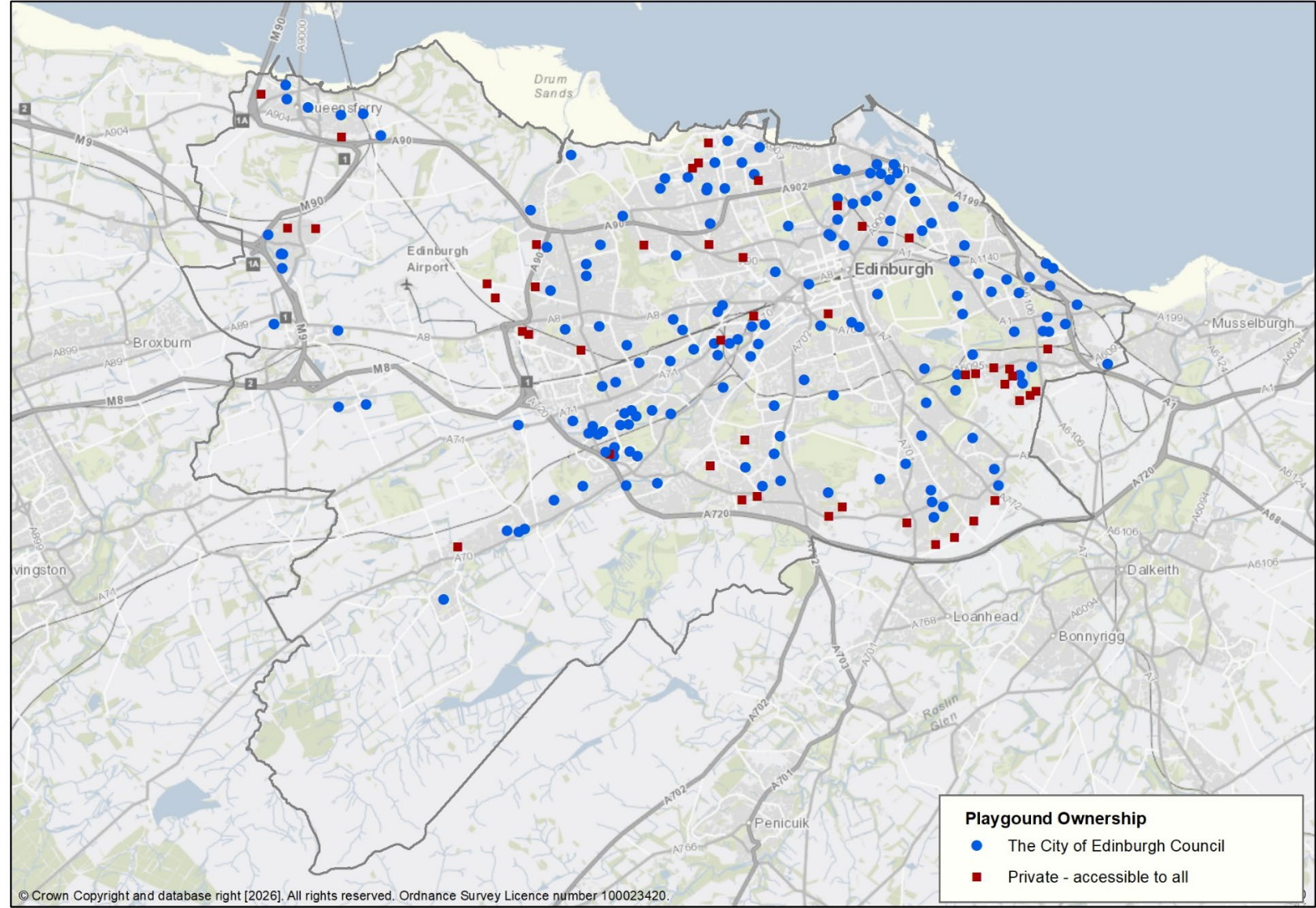


Figure 29 – Geographical distribution of private and council owned playgrounds

Table 7 – Total number of formal areas of play (playgrounds) in the local authority – Play Value

Ward	Total Number of Playgrounds	Number of playgrounds rated Fair	% - Fair	Number of playgrounds rated Good	% - Good	Number of playgrounds rated Very Good	% - Very good	Number of playgrounds rated Excellent	% - Excellent
Local Authority	205	112	55%	79	39%	11	5%	3	1%
Ward 1: Almond	23	9	39%	13	57%	1	4%	0	0%
Ward 2: Pentland Hills	25	18	72%	7	28%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 3: Drum Brae / Gyle	10	5	50%	5	50%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 4: Forth	15	9	60%	6	40%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 5: Inverleith	10	6	60%	4	40%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 6: Corstorphine / Murrayfield	6	3	50%	2	33%	1	17%	0	0%
Ward 7: Sighthill / Gorgie	16	10	63%	5	31%	0	0%	1	6%
Ward 8: Colinton / Fairmilehead	11	3	27%	7	64%	1	9%	0	0%
Ward 9: Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart	5	3	60%	2	40%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 10: Morningside	6	3	50%	2	33%	1	17%	0	0%
Ward 11: City Centre	4	1	25%	2	50%	1	25%	0	0%
Ward 12: Leith Walk	10	4	40%	4	40%	2	20%	0	0%
Ward 13: Leith	8	6	75%	1	13%		0%	1	13%
Ward 14: Craigentinny / Duddingston	9	4	44%	3	33%	2	22%	0	0%
Ward 15: Southside / Newington	5	2	40%	1	20%	1	20%	1	20%
Ward 16: Liberton / Gilmerton	15	7	47%	7	47%	1	7%	0	0%
Ward 17: Portobello / Craigmillar	27	19	70%	8	30%	0		0	0%

Table 8 - Council owned and managed Playgrounds – Play Value

Play Sufficiency Assessment 2026

Ward	Total Number of Playgrounds	Number of playgrounds rated Fair	% - Fair	Number of playgrounds rated Good	% - Good	Number of playgrounds rated Very Good	% - Very good	Number of playgrounds rated Excellent	% - Excellent
Local Authority	159	78	49%	68	43%	10	6%	3	2%
Ward 1: Almond	16	5	31%	10	63%	1	6%	0	0%
Ward 2: Pentland Hills	24	18	75%	6	25%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 3: Drum Brae / Gyle	6	2	33%	4	67%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 4: Forth	11	7	64%	4	36%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 5: Inverleith	7	3	43%	4	57%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 6: Corstorphine / Murrayfield	6	3	50%	2	33%	1	17%		0%
Ward 7: Sighthill / Gorgie	14	8	57%	5	36%	0	0%	1	7%
Ward 8: Colinton / Fairmilehead	6	1	17%	5	83%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 9: Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart	4	2	50%	2	50%	0	0%	0	0%
Ward 10: Morningside	6	3	50%	2	33%	1	17%	0	0%
Ward 11: City Centre	3		0%	2	67%	1	33%	0	0%
Ward 12: Leith Walk	7	1	14%	4	57%	2	29%	0	0%
Ward 13: Leith	8	6	75%	1	13%	0	0%	1	13%
Ward 14: Craighentiny / Duddingston	9	4	44%	3	33%	2	22%	0	0%
Ward 15: Southside / Newington	5	2	40%	1	20%	1	20%	1	20%
Ward 16: Liberton / Gilmerton	10	3	30%	6	60%	1	10%	0	0%
Ward 17: Portobello / Craigmillar	17	10	59%	7	41%	0		0	0%

Table 9 – Number of areas with outdoor sports play facilities

Play Sufficiency Assessment 2026

Ward	Ball courts (basketball/ MUGAS/ Kick pitches)	Table tennis	Wheel	Climbing wall	Trim trail	Outdoor Gyms	Total
Local Authority	40	6	10	2	2	31	91
Ward 1: Almond	4		1			1	6
Ward 2: Pentland Hills	6						6
Ward 3: Drum Brae / Gyle	2		1			1	4
Ward 4: Forth	2					1	3
Ward 5: Inverleith	4	2	1	1	1	1	10
Ward 6: Corstorphine / Murrayfield	1	1					2
Ward 7: Sighthill / Gorgie	4		2			2	8
Ward 8: Colinton / Fairmilehead	2						2
Ward 9: Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart					1	1	2
Ward 10: Morningside						3	3
Ward 11: City Centre	1		1			6	8
Ward 12: Leith Walk	2						2
Ward 13: Leith	3					1	4
Ward 14: Craigmillar / Duddingston	1		1				2
Ward 15: Southside / Newington	1	3				6	10
Ward 16: Liberton / Gilmerton	2					7	9
Ward 17: Portobello / Craigmillar	5		3	1		1	10

Access

The next table show the number and percentage of residential properties that have access to playgrounds of different play values, based on the accessibility distances set out in the Open Space Strategy – Play Standard. For example, some properties have access to playgrounds of Good, Very Good and Excellent, while others have access only to playgrounds of a single play value. The table provides an indication of the quality of distribution of formal play opportunities available to residents across the local authority and individual wards.

Table 10 – Number and percentage of properties with access to playgrounds of different play values based the Play Standard defined in the Open Space Strategy 2021, by local authority and ward.

Edinburgh – Local Authority		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Access to Good, Very Good and Excellent	27,808	11.0
Good and Very Good	11,567	4.0
Good and Excellent	30,011	11.0
Very Good and Excellent	19,862	8.0
Good only	73,484	28.0
Very Good only	15,878	6.0
Excellent only	36,785	14.0
Fair only	48,924	19.0
Total number of properties within ward	264,319	100

Ward 1: Almond		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good and Very Good	1,415	8.3
Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good only	10,125	59.5

Very Good only	724	4.3
Excellent only	0	0.0
Fair only	4,759	28.0
Total number of properties within ward	17,023	100

Ward 2: Pentland Hills		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good and Very Good	0	0.0
Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good only	7,894	56.1
Very Good only	0	0.0
Excellent only	0	0.0
Fair only	6,175	43.9
Total number of properties within ward	14,069	100

Ward 3: Drum Brae / Gyle		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good and Very Good	0	0.0
Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good only	7,639	67.4
Very Good only	0	0.0
Excellent only	40	0.4
Fair only	3,652	32.2
Total number of properties within ward	11,331	100

Ward 4: Forth		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	934	5.6
Good and Very Good	48	0.3
Good and Excellent	266	1.6
Very Good and Excellent	138	0.8
Good only	9,338	55.6
Very Good only	0	0.0
Excellent only	1	0.0
Fair only	6,055	36.1
Total number of properties within ward	16,780	100

Ward 5: Inverleith		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	4	0.0
Good and Very Good	177	1.1
Good and Excellent	50	0.3
Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good only	6,787	41.8
Very Good only	1,278	7.9
Excellent only	31	0.2
Fair only	7,900	48.7
Total number of properties within ward	16,227	100

Ward 6: Corstorphine / Murrayfield		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	135	1.2
Good and Very Good	0	0.0
Good and Excellent	1,844	16.2
Very Good and Excellent	2,401	21.1
Good only	2,803	24.7
Very Good only	35	0.3
Excellent only	2,274	20.0
Fair only	1,878	16.5
Total number of properties within ward	11,370	100

Ward 7: Sighthill / Gorgie		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	481	2.8
Good and Very Good	129	0.8
Good and Excellent	7,135	42.1
Very Good and Excellent	547	3.2
Good only	3,061	18.1
Very Good only	18	0.1
Excellent only	4,683	27.7
Fair only	874	5.2
Total number of properties within ward	16,928	100

Ward 8: Colinton / Fairmilehead		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good and Very Good	2,899	27.7
Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good only	4,063	38.8
Very Good only	328	3.1
Excellent only	0	0.0
Fair only	3,170	30.3
Total number of properties within ward	10,460	100

Ward 9: Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good and Very Good	2,899	27.7
Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good only	4,063	38.8
Very Good only	328	3.1
Excellent only	0	0.0
Fair only	3,170	30.3
Total number of properties within ward	10,460	100

Ward 10: Morningside		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	248	1.7
Good and Very Good	1,506	10.3
Good and Excellent	5,430	37.0
Very Good and Excellent	139	0.9
Good only	680	4.6
Very Good only	2,932	20.0
Excellent only	2,688	18.3
Fair only	1,034	7.1
Total number of properties within ward	14,657	100

Ward 11: City Centre		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	4,302	21.6
Good and Very Good	461	2.3
Good and Excellent	4,725	23.7
Very Good and Excellent	4,787	24.0
Good only	1,273	6.4
Very Good only	2,755	13.8
Excellent only	1,328	6.7
Fair only	289	1.5
Total number of properties within ward	19,920	100

Ward 12: Leith Walk		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	13,662	64.7
Good and Very Good	0	0.0
Good and Excellent	2,953	14.0
Very Good and Excellent	3,314	15.7
Good only	1,046	5.0
Very Good only	0	0.0
Excellent only	146	0.7
Fair only	0	0.0
Total number of properties within ward	21,121	100

Ward 13: Leith		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	6,400	43.8
Good and Very Good	0	0.0
Good and Excellent	469	3.2
Very Good and Excellent	2,113	14.4
Good only	0	0.0
Very Good only	0	0.0
Excellent only	4,500	30.8
Fair only	1,141	7.8
Total number of properties within ward	14,623	100

Ward 14: Craigentinny / Duddingston		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	1,510	9.2
Good and Very Good	3,598	22.0
Good and Excellent	307	1.9
Very Good and Excellent	5,553	33.9
Good only	1,050	6.4
Very Good only	1,751	10.7
Excellent only	2,277	13.9
Fair only	339	2.1
Total number of properties within ward	16,385	100

Ward 15: Southside / Newington		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	132	0.8
Good and Very Good	33	0.2
Good and Excellent	2,824	17.7
Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good only	169	1.1
Very Good only	383	2.4
Excellent only	12,304	77.0
Fair only	132	0.8
Total number of properties within ward	15,977	100

Play Sufficiency Assessment 2026

Ward 16: Liberton / Gilmerton		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good and Very Good	665	3.4
Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good only	8,239	42.4
Very Good only	4,887	25.2
Excellent only	0	0.0
Fair only	5,630	29.0
Total number of properties within ward	19,421	100

Ward 17: Portobello / Craigmillar		
Play Values	Number of properties	%
Good, Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good and Very Good	636	3.9
Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Very Good and Excellent	0	0.0
Good only	8,782	53.4
Very Good only	602	3.7
Excellent only	0	0.0
Fair only	6,439	39.1
Total number of properties within ward	16,459	100

Visual representation of the homes not served by the play standards set in the Open Space Strategy in 2025 and 2015.

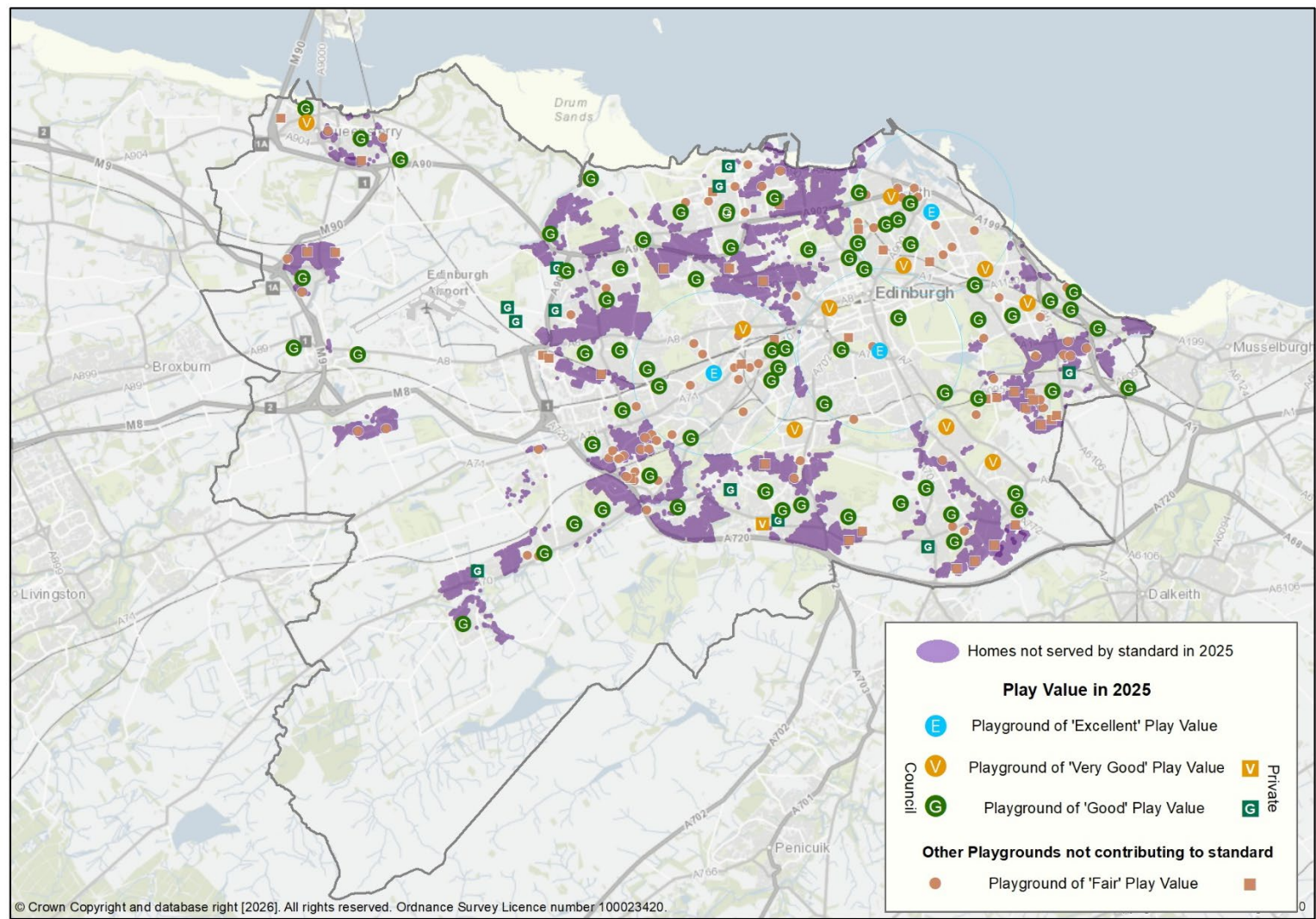


Figure 30 – Map of the homes not served by play standards in 2025

The next three tables explore the accessibility and inclusion of the playgrounds. It is divided into:

- Inclusive features;
- accessibility within the playground
- accessibility to the playground

Table 11 – Percentage of playgrounds providing inclusion features, by local authority and ward.

		Provision of quiet/enclosed spaces to address sensory sensitivity	Provision of a Changing Places toilet	Provision of at least two high value play opportunities suitable for users with mobility aids (e.g. wide slides/ roundabout/high backed swing)
Local Authority	Yes	3%	1% ³¹	4%
	No	89%	99%	93%
	Partly	8%	0%	3%
Ward 1	Yes	0%	0%	0%
	No	96%	100%	100%
	Partly	4%	0%	0%
Ward 2	Yes	0%	0%	0%
	No	92%	100%	100%
	Partly	8%	0%	0%
Ward 3	Yes	10%	0%	0%
	No	90%	100%	100%
	Partly	0%	0%	0%

³¹ The Meadows has a changing place facility; however, this facility is not located in the immediate vicinity of a play area. Nonetheless, it has the potential to offer support to the following playgrounds:

		Provision of quiet/enclosed spaces to address sensory sensitivity	Provision of a Changing Places toilet	Provision of at least two high value play opportunities suitable for users with mobility aids (e.g. wide slides/ roundabout/high backed swing)
Ward 4	Yes	0%	0%	0%
	No	100%	100%	93%
	Partly	0%	0%	7%
Ward 5	Yes	10%	10%	0%
	No	90%	90%	100%
	Partly	0%	0%	0%
Ward 6	Yes	0%	0%	0%
	No	100%	100%	100%
	Partly	0%	0%	0%
Ward 7	Yes	0%	6%	13%
	No	88%	94%	81%
	Partly	12%	0%	6%
Ward 8	Yes	0%	0%	0%
	No	91%	100%	100%
	Partly	9%	0%	0%
Ward 9	Yes	0%	0%	0%
	No	100%	100%	80%
	Partly	0%	0%	20%
Ward 10	Yes	33%	0%	17%
	No	33%	100%	83%
	Partly	33%	0%	0%
	Yes	25%	0%	25%

Meadows Active Play Area and Meadows Toddler Park (approx. 500m away), and West Meadow (approx. 600m away).

Play Sufficiency Assessment 2026

Ward 11	No	50%	100%	75%
	Partly	25%	0%	0%

		Provision of quiet/enclosed spaces to address sensory sensitivity	Provision of a Changing Places toilet	Provision of at least two high value play opportunities suitable for users with mobility aids (e.g. wide slides/ roundabout/high backed swing)
Ward 12	Yes	10%	0%	10%
	No	90%	100%	80%
	Partly	0%	0%	10%
Ward 13	Yes	0%	12.5%	12.5%
	No	87.5%	87.5%	87.5%
	Partly	12.5%	0%	0%
Ward 14	Yes	0%	0%	11%
	No	89%	100%	89%
	Partly	11%	0%	0%
Ward 15	Yes	0%	0%	20%
	No	40%	100%	80%
	Partly	60%	0%	0%
Ward 16	Yes	0%	0%	0%
	No	93%	100%	87%
	Partly	7%	0%	13%
Ward 17	Yes	0%	0%	4%
	No	93%	100%	92%
	Partly	7%	0%	4%

Table 12 - Percentage of playgrounds providing accessibility within the play space

		Wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/ rest sites	Hard surface access to all pieces of equipment/ rest sites	Wayfinding/accessible signage to enable navigation through the space	Provision of accessible sheltered/shaded areas
Local Authority	Yes	67%	55%	0%	12%
	No	16%	27%	100%	82%
	Partly	17%	18%	0%	6%
Ward 1	Yes	52%	35%	0%	9%
	No	26%	48%	100%	91%
	Partly	22%	17%	0%	0%
Ward 2	Yes	72%	56%	0%	16%
	No	4%	12%	100%	80%
	Partly	24%	32%	0%	4%
Ward 3	Yes	100%	90%	0%	0%
	No	0%	10%	100%	100%
	Partly	0%	0%	0%	0%
Ward 4	Yes	80%	73%	0%	0%
	No	20%	27%	100%	87%
	Partly	0%	0%	0%	13%
Ward 5	Yes	70%	60%	0%	20%
	No	30%	30%	100%	70%
	Partly	0%	10%	0%	10%
Ward 6	Yes	67%	67%	0%	50%
	No	17%	17%	100%	33%

Play Sufficiency Assessment 2026

	Partly	17%	17%	0%	17%
Ward 7	Yes	69%	63%	0%	6%
	No	19%	19%	100%	94%
	Partly	13%	19%	0%	0%

		Wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/ rest sites	Hard surface access to all pieces of equipment/ rest sites	Wayfinding/accessible signage to enable navigation through the space	Provision of accessible sheltered/shaded areas
Ward 8	Yes	64%	55%	0%	0%
	No	18%	36%	100%	100%
	Partly	18%	9%	0%	0%
Ward 9	Yes	100%	100%	0%	0%
	No	0%	0%	100%	60%
	Partly	0%	0%	0%	40%
Ward 10	Yes	50%	33%	0%	67%
	No	33%	33%	100%	33%
	Partly	17%	33%	0%	0%
Ward 11	Yes	100%	100%	0%	50%
	No	0%	0%	100%	50%
	Partly	0%	0%	0%	0%
Ward 12	Yes	90%	70%	0%	10%
	No	0%	20%	100%	90%
	Partly	10%	10%	0%	0%
Ward 13	Yes	63%	50%	0%	13%
	No	25%	38%	100%	75%
	Partly	13%	13%	0%	13%
Ward 14	Yes	56%	33%	0%	11%
	No	22%	44%	100%	89%
	Partly	22%	22%	0%	0%

Ward 15	Yes	20%	0%	0%	40%
	No	40%	40%	100%	40%
	Partly	40%	60%	0%	20%

		Wide access routes to all pieces of equipment/ rest sites	Hard surface access to all pieces of equipment/ rest sites	Wayfinding/accessible signage to enable navigation through the space	Provision of accessible sheltered/shaded areas
Ward 16	Yes	60%	33%	0%	0%
	No	7%	47%	100%	100%
	Partly	33%	20%	0%	0%
Ward 17	Yes	59%	52%	0%	7%
	No	19%	22%	100%	81%
	Partly	22%	26%	0%	11%

Table 13 - Accessibility to the playground

		Provision of wide, hard surface and flush access routes into play space	Parking facilities suitable for vehicles with side and rear ramps	Clearly marked and safe walkways between disabled parking bays and play space entrance
Local Authority	Yes	60%	4%	3%
	No	9%	91%	92%
	Partly	31%	4%	5%
Ward 1	Yes	61%	13%	4%
	No	9%	83%	91%
	Partly	30%	4%	4%
Ward 2	Yes	24%	0%	4%
	No	12%	88%	92%

Play Sufficiency Assessment 2026

	Partly	64%	12%	4%
--	--------	-----	-----	----

		Provision of wide, hard surface and flush access routes into play space	Parking facilities suitable for vehicles with side and rear ramps	Clearly marked and safe walkways between disabled parking bays and play space entrance
Ward 3	Yes	90%	20%	20%
	No	10%	80%	70%
	Partly	0%	0%	10%
Ward 4	Yes	67%	0%	0%
	No	13%	100%	100%
	Partly	20%	0%	0%
Ward 5	Yes	90%	10%	10%
	No	0%	70%	80%
	Partly	10%	20%	10%
Ward 6	Yes	67%	0%	0%
	No	17%	100%	100%
	Partly	17%	0%	0%
Ward 7	Yes	63%	13%	6%
	No	6%	88%	88%
	Partly	31%	0%	6%
Ward 8	Yes	55%	0%	0%
	No	9%	100%	100%
	Partly	36%	0%	0%
Ward 9	Yes	60%	0%	0%
	No	0%	100%	100%
	Partly	40%	0%	0%

		Provision of wide, hard surface and flush access routes into play space	Parking facilities suitable for vehicles with side and rear ramps	Clearly marked and safe walkways between disabled parking bays and play space entrance
Ward 10	Yes	83%	0%	0%
	No	17%	100%	100%
	Partly	0%	0%	0%
Ward 11	Yes	100%	0%	0%
	No	0%	75%	75%
	Partly	0%	25%	25%
Ward 12	Yes	70%	0%	0%
	No	0%	100%	100%
	Partly	30%	0%	0%
Ward 13	Yes	62%	0%	0%
	No	13%	100%	100%
	Partly	25%	0%	0%
Ward 14	Yes	33%	0%	0%
	No	23%	100%	100%
	Partly	44%	0%	0%
Ward 15	Yes	60%	0%	0%
	No	0%	60%	100%
	Partly	40%	40%	0%
Ward 16	Yes	46.5%	0%	0%
	No	7%	100%	100%

Play Sufficiency Assessment 2026

	Partly	46.5%	0%	0%
Ward 17	Yes	67%	4%	0%
	No	7%	96%	85%
	Partly	26%	0%	15%

Appendix 5 - Engagement details

List of in person events with children and young people

Total number of children and young people involved was 141.

Table 14: Overview of target group participants for engagement

Target Group	Number of participants	School year/Age range	Group	Location
Trinity Academy	4	S2-S4	School – neurodiverse pupils	North Edinburgh
Craigmount Highschool	8	S4	School	Craigmount
Edinburgh Young Carers	7	7-10 years old	Young Cares	Edinburgh
Stepping Stones	1	11-year-old	Support services to young children	Pilton
Young People Questionnaire	7	11-15 years old	Pupils	Edinburgh
Passion4Fusion	22	8-18 years old	Supporting Black & Multiethnic Communities	Wester Hails
Livvy Youth Scotland	31	7 to 16 years old	Black and Global Majority* led youth charity	Craigmillar
St Thomas of Aquins Highschool	6	S1-S4	School	City Centre
Queensferry Highschool	21	S1-S6	School	South Queensferry /Kirkliston
Drummond High School	6	S2-S5	School	City Centre
Score Scotland	15	12 to 23 years old	Supporting young people	Edinburgh

Stepping Stones	8	P7	Support services to young children	Pilton/Muirhouse
Mindroom	5	15-19	Neurodiverse young people	Leith

List of in-person events with adults

In collaboration with colleagues preparing City Plan 2040, in person drop-in events took place in the following locations:

- Waverley Court
- Gyle Shopping Centre
- Kirkliston Parish Church Hall
- Sighthill Library
- Oxfords Library
- Drumbrae Library
- Magdalene Community Centre
- North Arts Community Centre
- Cameron Toll Shopping Centre
- Gilmerton Community Centre

List of focus groups with adults

Target Group	Number of participants	Location
Parents of ASN	4	Edinburgh
Oaklands School	4	North Edinburgh
Young Mothers groups	6	Citadel – Leith, Edinburgh

Appendix 6 – Engagement results

Early Years engagement

Nurseries that took part:

1. Leith Primary School
2. Broughton Primary School
3. Colinton Primary School
4. Craigmillar EY
5. Duddingston Primary School
6. Fort Early Years Centre
7. Frogston Primary School
8. Stenhouse Early Years Centre
9. Stockbridge Primary School
10. Dalry
11. Carrick Knowe Primary School
12. Oxbgangs Primary School
13. Dalmeny Primary School
14. Rowanberry Kindergarten
15. Bonaly Primary School
16. Clermiston Primary School
17. Fox Covert Primary School

Table 15 – Quotes from children organised by themes

Who takes children to play outdoors?
"My mummy and daddy take me to play outside" ; "Mum and dad takes me there" ; "Mummy and daddy and my two sisters go there" ; "My mum takes me to park and I play on swing" ; "Daddy pushes you on the swing" ; "I went with my mum and dad" ; "My mum and Dad takes me to the Inverleith Park" ; Daddy take me" ; "My family takes me there" ; "Granny Liz took me to the park" ; "I go with Granny" ; "I go with aunty" ; "My sister takes me" ; "I go to soft play with my childminder"

Where do children play?	
Parks	Nature and outdoor environments
"I like to go to the park" "The park near my house" "I like to go to 2 parks" "The blue park is big" "Sometimes I go to the big park and the little park too" Frequently mentioned parks: • Leith Links • Victoria Park • Saughton Park • Inverleith Park • The Meadows • Harrison Park • Pilrig Park • Pentland Hill • Meggetland Park • Scotmid Park • Colinton Park • Spider park" (referring Craigmillar Park) • Mortonhall wood • Seven Acre Park	"I like to go for walks in the woods" "At the forest, climbing trees" "I love playing in forest" "The beach, park, play slide" "Portobello when it is wet" "Build sandcastles"
Leisure spaces	
"I like soft play" "Ball pit" "Trampoline park" "Swimming pool" "The zoo" "Museum" "Time Twister" "Air Hop"	

Which types of play do they prefer?	
Physical and adventurous play	Social play and imagination
"I like to climb" "I like the monkey bars" "I go on the flying fox" "I am not scared of heights" "I like running on my own" "I like running fast like Sonic" "Balancing on the big logs" "Climbing trees" "I like climbing the trees"	"Tea parties with my dolls" "Roleplay as Spiderman" "I play shark escape with my dad" "Hide and seek" "I like playing with my family and friends"
Nature and sensory experiences	Physical/Sports
"I like the flowers" "I like the bushes" "Collect the sticks and pinecones" "Mud kitchen" "Play in mud" "Watch the waves" "I like the flowers" "Trees and leaves"	"Ball" "catching" "Kicking balls" ". I like to take different balls and play with them" "I go for a swim with my daddy. I like being under water" "I play football with my sister." "Soccer ball, good posts" "Roller skate ramp" "Play with the football, daddy can kick it all the way to the sky." "Scooter" One day I ride my bike to the park

Equipment
"I like the basket swing" "The slide" "Climbing frame" "I like the big slide because it is fast" "Flying fox" "The roundabout. It spins" "Monkey bars" "Trampoline" "See-saw" "Sandpit"

"I play down the slide" "A trampoline" "I played on the swing" "I love the slide and everything" "I climbed on the climbing frame, it was high, it was a slide" "I like the flying fox. I close my eyes and listen to the bang" "Swings: different types for little people and big people"
--

Dislikes	
Weather and environmental conditions	Dog fouling
"I don't like playing outside if it is raining or windy or cold" "When it is windy I can't go outside" "Playing in the rain" (does not enjoy) "There is a park with a sandpit, if it rains, I can't go"	"There's dog poo there" "Dog poo" "Doggies come and poop in it"
Fear, discomfort and challenge	Other dislikes
"I don't like going too high on the swing" "I don't like the climbing frame because it is too high" "I don't like the spinning thing because it makes me feel dizzy" "I don't like climbing too high"	"I cannot ride my bike in the park" "The roundabout is broken" "I do not like the smaller park" "Dangerous crossing"

Independence
"I am going by myself because I am big" "I run cause I like running on my own" "I ride my scooter" "I go myself" "I can do some tricks"

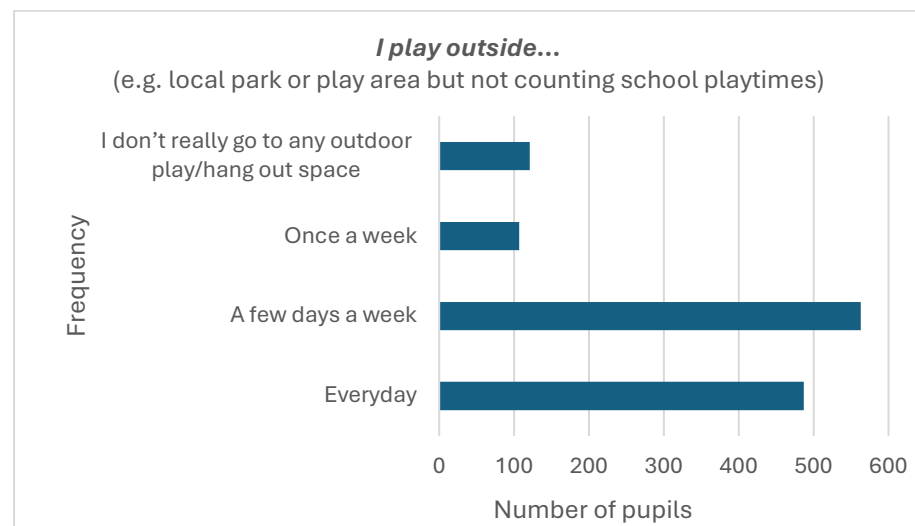
P1 to P5 Engagement results

Q1. *I play outside...*

(e.g. local park or play area but not counting school playtimes)

Answer	Number of Pupils	Percentage
Every day	487	38.11%
A few days a week	663	44.05%
Once a week	107	8.37%
I don't really go to any outdoor play/hang out space	121	9.47%

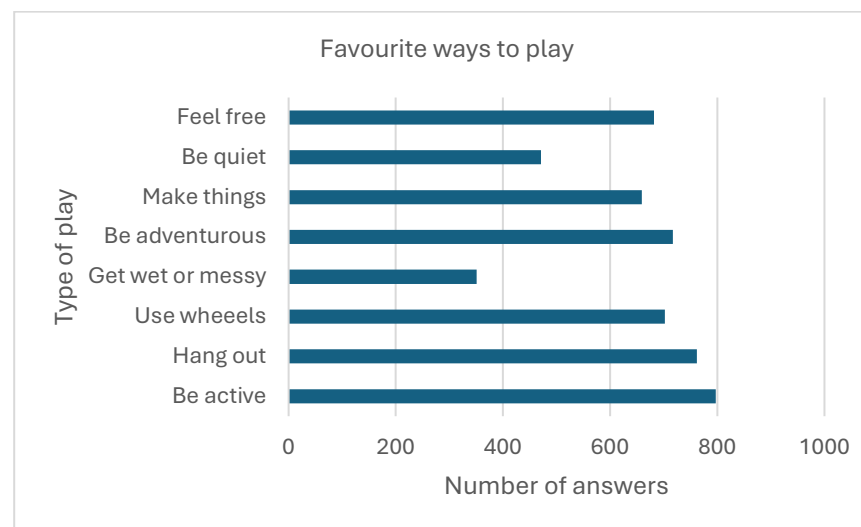
n=1278



Q2. What are your favourite **WAYS** to play?

Answer	Number of children
Be active: run jump, slide, swing, ball games, skip, chase	797
Hang out: Meet friends, chat, laugh, shout, hang around	762
Use wheels: cycle, scoot, skate, skateboard	702
Get wet or messy: paddling, mud, digging, water play	351

Be adventurous: climb, be daring, hang upside down, jump from high up, swing high, balance	717
Make things: create, draw, paint, build things, make dens	659
Be quiet: imagine, dream, invent, hide, chill	471
Feel free: get out of the house, express yourself, away from adults, be yourself	682



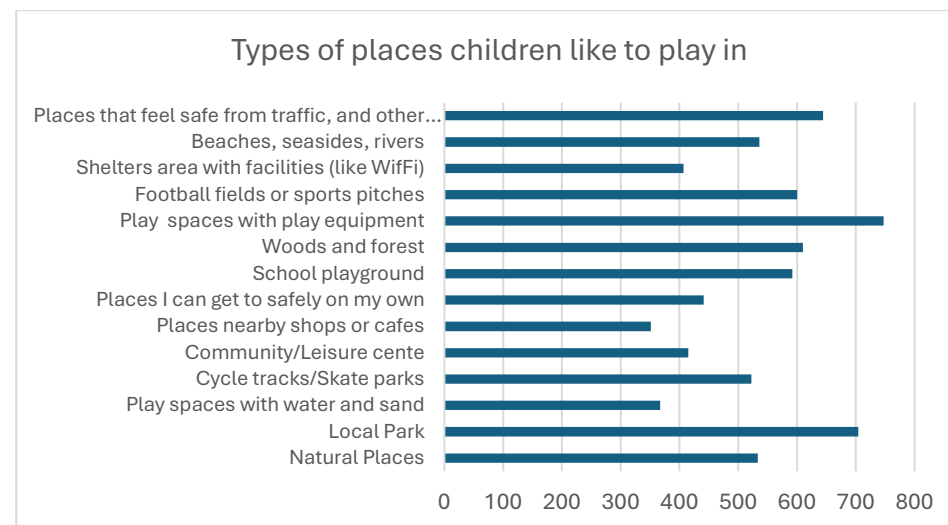
Q3. *When I am out playing in my local area...*

Answer	Number of children	Percentage
I can do MOST of my favourite things	761	61.12%
I can do SOME of my favourite things	388	31.16%
I can do HARLDY ANY of my favourite things	96	7.71%

n=1245

Q4. What different types of places do you like to play in? (Hands up for the ones you like best)

Answer	Number of children
Natural places with trees, bushes, flowers	533
A local park	704
Play spaces with water and sand	367
Cycle tracks or skate parks	522
Community centre or leisure centre	415
Places near shops or cafes	351
Places I can get to safely on my own	441
School playground	592
Woods and forest	610
Play spaces with equipment like swings, slides, climbing frames	747
Football fields or sports pitches	600
Sheltered area with some facilities (like Wi-Fi)	407
Beaches, the seaside, rivers	536
Places that feel safe from traffic, and other things that make me feel unsafe	644



Q5. In your local area... which of these is true (Hands up survey).

Answer	Number of children	Percentage
There are LOTS of my favourite places to play	488	40.9%
There are SOME of my favourite places to play	488	40.9%
There are HARLDY ANY of my favourite places to play	218	18.3%

n=1194

Q5.a) Favourite place to play in Edinburgh

Parks and Greenspaces	Other outdoor spaces	Other
Saughton Park Leith Links Portobello Beach Victoria Park Water of Leith Inverleith Park Princes Street Gardens	Outside my home Beach Park outside Pitches Football pitches Alone in nature	Tumbles Air Hop World of football Soft play Jack Kane centre Swimming pool Museum

Pilrig Park Craigentinny Park Figgate Park Harrison Park Holyrood Park Arthur's Seat Dalkeith Country Park Cramond Beach Meadowfield Park Portobello Beach Corstorphine Hill Lauriston Castle The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh Cammo Estate Rosefield Park Goldenacre Playing Fields Redbraes Park Montgomery Street Park Lochend Park King George V Park Dalmeny Street Park Pirate Park (Straiton Place) Granton Gasholder Granton Mill Crescent Dean Gardens Muirwood Park Corstorphine hill St Marks Park, St George Park Ravelston Woods Pentland View Park Granton Beach Bloomiehall Park Pentland Park Brockview Park, Rosefield Garden Pilton Park Balfour street park Roley's Wood The Gyle	Pitches Astro (Broughton High School) Skate park Places away from the road Grassy area across my house Pond at Queen Margaret University Power League football pitches in Portobello My estate Nearby forest Lost Shore At friends' or extended family houses/garden Beaches with friends Woods and forests Playparks Grounds of an estate Granny's farm Vogrie Country Park Newhailes Estate Warriston Playing fields Dunbar East links farm park Muirhouse skate park Stables in balerno Currie High School football pitch Portobello High School pitches Glentress bike tracks School playground Harlaw Reservoir Pony Park' at Braehead Connie Fox Craigie's Farm Edinburgh Zoo 'Pirate Park' behind Cramond Kirk Woods near school Royal High Astro	Trampoline park Ryse Trampoline Park Portobello swimming pool Innoflate Climbing Centres Victoria Swim Centre Leith Community Centre Wonderworld Ainslie Park Murrayfield ice skating Muirhouse library Shops Scotmid Currie Community Centre Gravity Fountain Park Eden rock Time Twister
--	---	---

Q6. How many different outdoor spaces do you go to regularly?

Number of places	Number of children	Percentage
1-2	430	48.2%
3-4	288	32.3%
5+	175	19.6%

n=893

Q7. Is there an outdoor space near to where you live that you can walk or wheel to on your own or with friends (without any adults)?

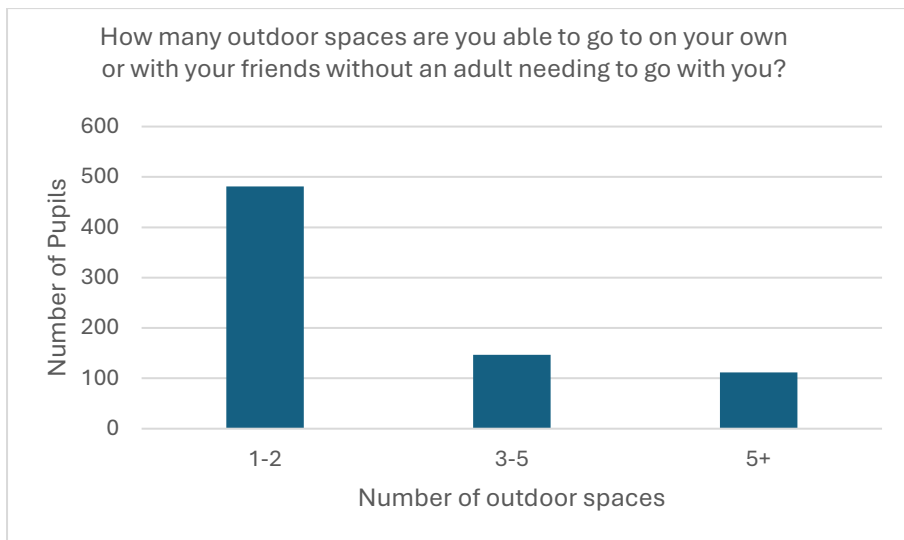
Answer	Number of children	Percentage
YES	667	77.4%
NO	195	22.6%

n= 862

Q8***. How many outdoor spaces are you able to go to on your own or with your friends without an adult needing to go with you? (Hands up survey)

Number of places	Number of children	Percentage
1-2	481	65.0%
3-4	147	19.9%
5+	112	15.1%

n=740



Q9. How safe do you feel when playing out in your local area? (Hands up survey)

Safety	Number of children	Percentage
I USUALLY feel safe	811	65.4%
I SOMETIMES feel safe	332	26.8%
I NEVER feel safe	97	7.8%

n=1240

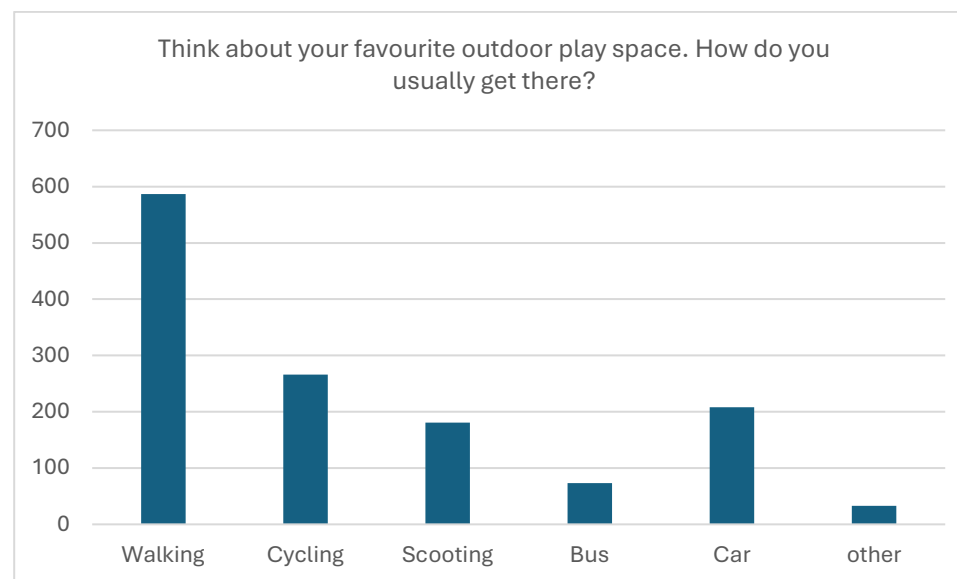
Q10. Think about your favourite outdoor play space. How do you usually get there?

Mode	Number of children	Percentage
Walking	587	43.5%
Cycling	266	19.7%
Scooting	181	13.4%
On the bus	73	5.4%

In a car	208	15.4%
Other	33	2.4%

n=1348

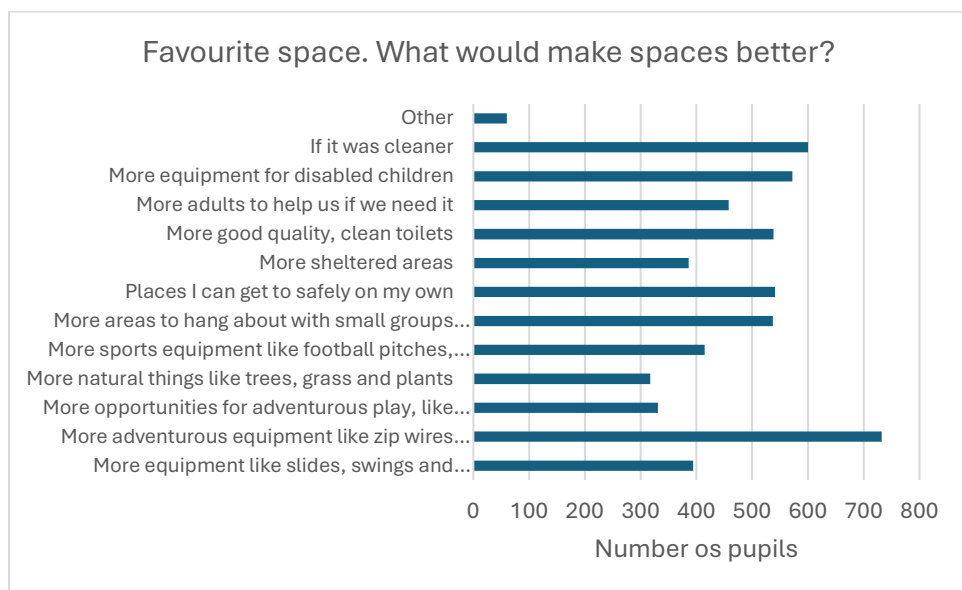
Other: Skateboard, run, roller skates, tram



Q11. Keep thinking about your favourite outdoor play space. What would make it better?

Attributes	Number of children
More equipment like slides, swings and roundabouts	394
More adventurous equipment like zip wires and high climbs	732
More opportunities for adventurous play, like building things with loose parts (example: stick, twigs, stones, shells, soils, logs, pinecones, etc)	331
More natural things like trees, grass and plants	317

More sports equipment like football pitches, tennis courts or basketball hoops	415
More areas to hang about with small groups of friends	537
Places I can get to safely on my own	541
More sheltered areas	386
More good quality, clean toilets	538
More adults to help us if we need it	458
More equipment for disabled children	572
If it was cleaner	600
Other	60



Q12. Now think about an outdoor play space that you don't like. Why don't you like it?

Answer	Number of children
There is sometimes dog poo in the play space	679
There is sometimes litter lying around for example cans, paper or cigarette butts	616
There is sometimes dangerous litter lying around, for example glass or needles	460
The equipment is broken or has missing parts	316
There is too much noise or pollution from nearby roads	321
I don't feel safe crossing the roads when walking to the play space	277
There are sometimes older children there that make me feel scared	450
There aren't any adults around to help if I need it	191
There are too many adults around, so I feel like I'm being watched	272
There aren't any toilets, or the toilets are dirty	458
I can't play with some or most of the equipment available	215
Other	40

P6 to P7 Engagement results

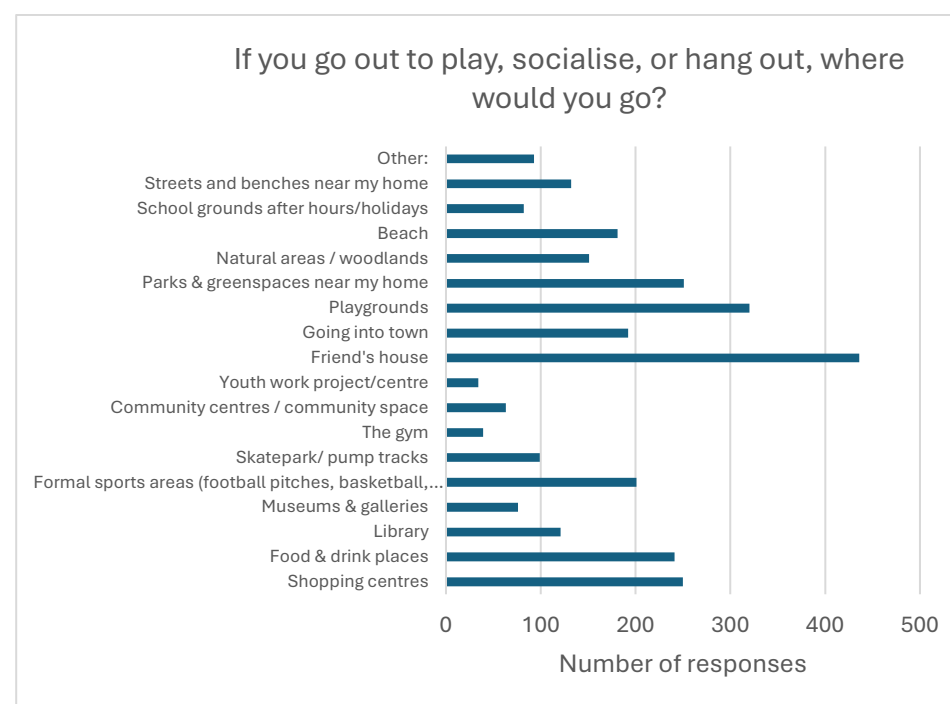
Q1. If you go out to play, socialise, or hang out, where would you go?

Locations	Number of responses
Shopping centres	250
Food & drink places	241
Library	121
Museums & galleries	76
Formal sports areas (football pitches, basketball, tennis courts)	201
Skatepark/ pump tracks	99
The gym	39
Community centres / community space	63
Youth work project/centre	34
Friend's house	436
Going into town	192
Playgrounds	320
Parks & greenspaces near my home	251
Natural areas / woodlands	151
Beach	181
School grounds after hours/holidays	82
Streets and benches near my home	132
Other:	93

Other types of spaces:

Theme	Illustrative Quotes
Home / indoor activities	My house, stay at home, gaming, Xbox, Roblox, friend's house, family, granny's house, sleepovers
Sport	Football, golf, darts, swimming, cycling, skating, Edinburgh Leisure centre

Informal local spaces	My street, outside my house, next to my house, in front of school
Nature/Outdoors	Walking, Woods, Pentland Hills, walking, Water of Leith, zoo
Not going out	Stay home, don't go out, not allowed out
Commercial spaces	McDonalds, Tesco, St James, cinema, malls, shop
Clubs / structured activities	Afterschool club



Q2. Are there enough activities, community clubs, and groups for young people to do within your local area?

Answers	Number of answers	Percentage
There are plenty	217	35%
There are a few	253	41%
None that I know about	55	9%
There are some, but I do not like them	60	10%
Yes, but they cost too much	27	4%
Not Answered	29	

n=641

Q3. Are there enough things for you to do on your weekends and holidays? - weekends and holidays

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	363	59%
Sometimes	200	32%
No	28	5%
Don't know	26	4%
Not answered	24	

n=641

Q4. There are many free art galleries and museums in Edinburgh. Do you go to any of them? - Free art galleries and museums

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
Often	44	7%
Sometimes	265	43%
Very Rarely	220	36%
Never	90	15%
Not answered	22	

n=641

Q5. How often do you go outside to play or hang out in your local area (not counting school times)?

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
Almost every day	185	29%
A few days a week	250	40%
Once a week	71	11%
Rarely	109	17%
I don't go outdoors to play or hang out	17	3%
Not answered	10	

n=641

Q6. Are there enough good parks or greenspaces near you to play/hang out?

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes, there are lots	215	34%
There are a few	308	49%
No, there aren't enough	97	15%
No, there aren't any	13	2%
Not answered	8	

Q7. What is your favourite park or greenspace in Edinburgh?

Analysis of P6/P7's favourite parks and greenspaces.

Main parks identified

Park / Greenspace
Saughton Park
Leith Links
Pilrig Park
Inverleith Park
The Meadows
Lochend Park
Harrison Park
Muir Wood Park
Muirwood

East Pilton Park
Victoria Park
Davidson's Mains Park
Princes Street Gardens
Inch Park
Juniper Green Park
Union Park
Dalmeny Park
Granton Park
Ravelston Park
Montgomery Park
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
Muirhouse Park
Holyrood Park
Moredun
Regent
King George V
Dalkeith country park
Hermitage of Braid
Morningside Park
The Braid Hills
Blackfordhill
Braidburn Valley
Redford woods
Dreghorn woods
Pentland Hills
Craiglockhart Woods
Queen street park
Water of Leith
Henderson st Park
Figgate Park
Craigentinnny Park
Jack Kane
Portobello
Newhailes

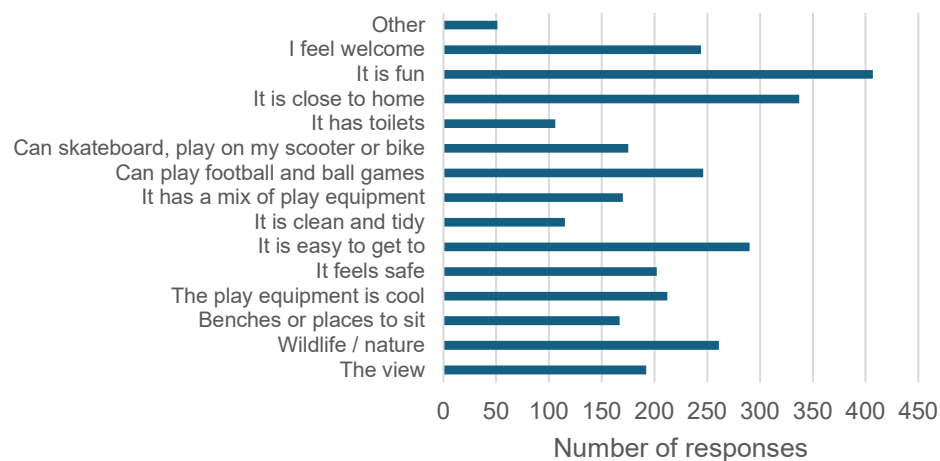
Other locations:

Name	Examples
Private	My garden, my house
Local, unnamed spaces	Local park, park next to my house, the one near school, field near my house
Nature/Informal greenspaces	Woods, forest, beach
Recreational spaces	Skatepark, football pitch, astro, trampoline parks (E.g. Airhop, Gravity), softplay

Q8. Think about your favourite places for you to hang out/play. What do you like about it? (Tick all that apply)

Items	Number of responses
View	192
Wildlife / nature	261
Benches or places to sit	167
The play equipment is cool	212
It feels safe	202
It is easy to get to	290
It is clean and tidy	115
It has a mix of play equipment	170
Can play football and ball games	246
Can skateboard, play on my scooter or bike	175
It has toilets	106
It is close to home	337
It is fun	407
I feel welcome	244
Other	51

Think about your favourite places for you to hang out/play. What do you like about it?

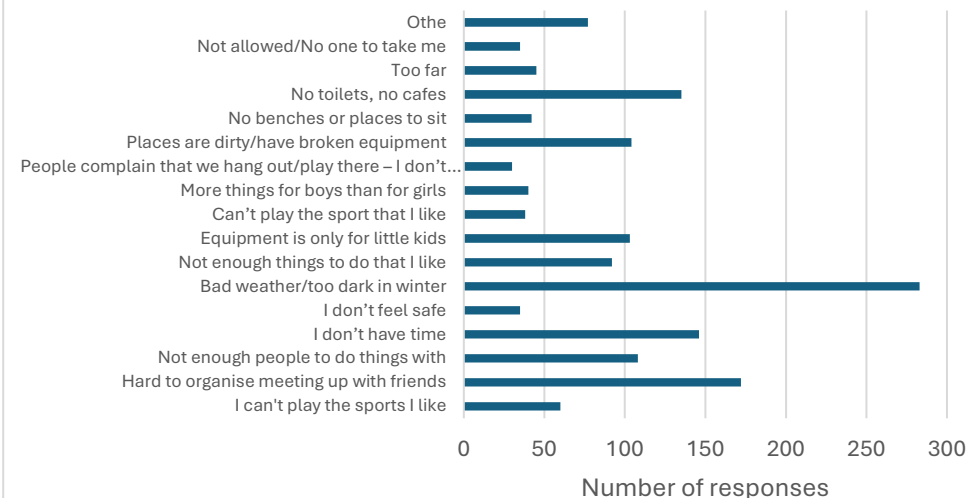


Q9. What stops you from using the outdoors/parks more often? (Tick all that apply)

Items	Number of responses
I can't play the sports I like	60
Hard to organise meeting up with friends	172
Not enough people to do things with	108
I don't have time	146
I don't feel safe	35
Bad weather/too dark in winter	283
Not enough things to do that I like	92
Equipment is only for little kids	103
More things for boys than for girls	38
People complain that we hang out/play there – I don't feel welcome	40
Places are dirty/have broken equipment	30
No benches or places to sit	104

No toilets, no cafes	42
Too far	135
Not allowed/No one to take me	45
Other	35

What stops you from using the outdoors/parks more often?



Q10. What would make it better?

Theme	Illustrative Quotes
Cleanliness & maintenance	"Less littering and less graffiti", "Less litter", "More clean", "More bins"; "Less dirty", "Maybe some more bins and maybe repaint some stuff if possible", "Usual clean ups more respect maybe certain rules or fines to stop littering community cleans and activities that take place there", "clean equipment", "No litter no dog poo", "park in front of my house... it's always dirty, you can't sit on the benches too because it's covered in bird poop."

Activities	"More fun activities", "More activities/events", "More stuff"; "It would be way better if there were more thing to do", "More activities in the park"
More / Fun/ better equipment	"More playground equipment like swings", "More fun equipment to use in a fun way", "more slides", "More big and cool full", "More equipment", "More play equipment that is fun", "More things to play with", "more things for girls", "More fun stuff", "There is no sand pit in Ravelston park ... I would love a trampoline, ... water pump would be a bonus", "More monkey bars", "slide"
Public toilets	"Toilets in parks!", "Add toilets", "toilets"
Lighting & feeling safe	"Lights", "park lights so you can see at night or late afternoon"
Traffic	"A lot less car that go 100mph in a school zone"; "Less traffic near the park which is disturbing wildlife", "more zebra crossings", "safer roads"
Benches & places to sit	" They could have more places to sit/hang out in general", "a little more benches", "Add like benches"
Food, cafés & shops	"Cafes", "green space with a park and a cafe in it", "If there were more food places / cafés", "More shops and food places",
Age appropriate spaces	"more appropriate for older people", "Have more big kids stuff not baby stuff"; "Make bigger kids stuff for the park", "and more big kid play parts.", "More big kids things to use", "Adding stuff for older kids", "to be a lot more fun things for older kids"
Sports facilities	"Better bike jumps", "skateparks"; "More sport pitches", "There can be go karts for rent and a track to race on it", "a separate badminton pitch", "More tracks for walking, biking,", "A net for people who enjoy playing tennis or badminton", "If it had a football pitch", "More football pitches", "More sports equipment", "football goals", "pump tracks", "more sports for girls", "rugby goals"
Accessibility & proximity	"To be more close", "A bit closer like in walking range in 5m"
Shelter / indoor spaces	"More shelters", "Have a roof over the basketball court",
Antisocial behaviour	"No one could litter or smoke/vape", "no teenager vaping in the area"
Safety	"More adults to make me feel more safe", "They could have people that make shore nothing silly goes on", "Maybe more security"; "Safer places check up on the area like no teenager vaping in the area", "more safe", "make it more safe", "More protection from strangers"
Nature	"More nature", "More... trees", "Some more bird boxes, bat boxes", "Maybe a bit more trees"

Q11. Are the outdoor spaces you go to clean?

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
Very Clean	29	5%
Clean	155	25%
Ok	328	54%
Dirty	71	12%
Very Dirty	29	5%
Not Answered	29	

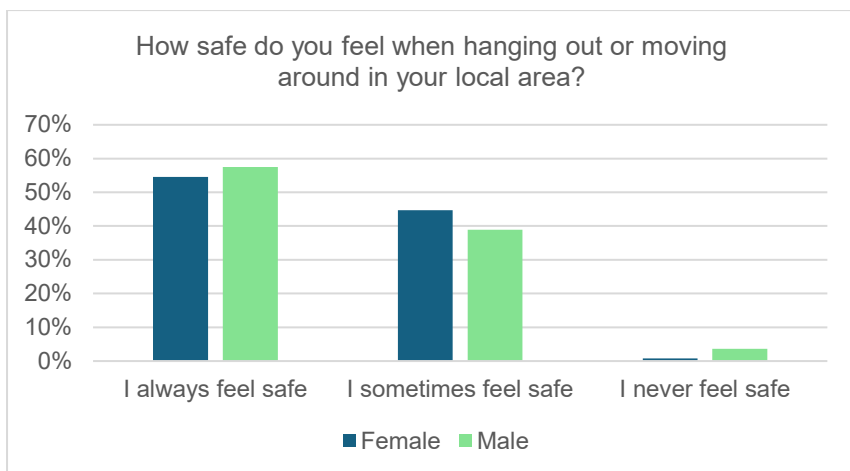
Q12. The outdoor play equipment where I go is:

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
In good condition	276	46%
Needs fixing	87	14%
Needs cleaned/painted	69	11%
Needs replacing	93	15%
There is not enough or any play equipment	77	13%
Not Answered	39	

Q13. How safe do you feel when hanging out or moving around in your local area?

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
I always feel safe	342	55%
I sometimes feel safe	258	42%
I never feel safe	17	3%
Not Answered	24	

Answer	Females	Male
I always feel safe	55%	57%
I sometimes feel safe	45%	39%
I never feel safe	1%	4%



Feeling unsafe alone / vulnerability	"I don't like going to places by myself", "I feel like I'm being followed", "I'm worried about kidnapping", "bullying"
General fear / anxiety	"
Local area	"Because it's dangerous out in Granton", "Because I live in a really weird place like there are a lot of bad people and I don't like"
Traffic / fast vehicles / bikes	"There could be cars", "Like there's cars and there like at 30 or something mph and you can't cross that well"
Dogs / environmental hazards	"Because sometimes when I go to the park I see broken glass bottles and cans and shopping trolleys in", "If there are big dogs I get a bit nervous"

Reasons for feeling unsafe

If you said 'sometimes' or 'never feel safe', why is that?

Theme	Illustrative Quotes
Darkness / poor lighting (especially winter)	"When it's dark I can only see silhouettes of people", "When it is dark", "when I'm going home it's really dark outside", "gets dark fast and a lot of dangerous people/thieves"
Unknown people	"It's because there's lots of weirdos", "there could be weirdo's", "It's because there are some bad people", "There is an old man that chases us about", "Weird people walking around", "Lot of dogy people", "because of skechy guys"
Antisocial behaviour (drugs, alcohol, smoking, vaping)	"Junkies", "Sometimes there are drunkies and I'm kinda scared of them", "Because I see lots of people that are not good in smoking drugs"
Groups	"Because there are a lot of teenagers and people on bikes in my area and it's quite scary travelling alone", "Because of big groups of older kids are sometimes there when it gets dark", "Because there's dirt bikes", "scared of the boys in balaclavas", "Sketchy teens on bikes"
Fear of crime / violence	"Because stuff has happened around the area before", "There is to many stabbings on my street. There was two on my street",

S1 to S6 Engagement results

Q1. If you go out to play, socialise, or hang out, where would you go?

Places	Number of responses
Shopping centres	809
Food & drink places	754
Library	146
Museums & galleries	173
Formal sports areas (football pitches, basketball, tennis courts)	339
Skatepark/ pump tracks	96
The gym	333
Community centres / community space	80
Youth work project/centre	41
Friend's house	905
Going into town	824
Playgrounds	260
Parks & greenspaces near my home	416
Natural areas / woodlands	387
Beach	313
School grounds after hours/holidays	107
Streets and benches near my home	223
Other:	80

Other spaces:

Theme	Illustrative Quotes
Home / Indoor / Digital spaces	Stay home, At home, My house, Gaming, Playing video games, Play Roblox, Online, Sit inside and play fort with the boys
Walking / wandering / informal movement	Going on walks, Walking, Go for a nice walk, I enjoy strolling around different neighbourhoods
Shops / town / commercial spaces	Town, Go to shops not too far away from home, Fort Kinnaird, Livingston (Wingstop), "Like Costa and Starbucks, Coffee shops
Sports (informal and formal)	Astro pitch, Cricket pitches and tennis courts, Football stadiums, My school football ground, Biking, golf, fishing
Cycling / mountain biking / trails	Mountain bike trails, Bike trails, Mountain bike trails/jumps, Riding my Surrón, Woods to go mountain biking
Nature / informal greenspace	Up hills, Fields, A big circle of grass, Abandoned train tracks

Structured activities / clubs	Musical club, Stage school, Edinburgh diving club, Dance classes, Volunteering and horse riding
Cinema / leisure venues	Cinema, cinema, Mini golf places and the cinema
Social spaces (friends / local street)	Joes house, Friend's house, My street with my friends
Barriers (access, distance, permission)	No skateparks... nearest is 20 minute drive, I've never socialised... not allowed to go out, I would go to the gym if it was closer
Disengagement / not going out	I don't go anywhere, I don't normally go out, No socialising, I don't hang out with my pals

Q2. Are there enough activities, community clubs, and groups for young people to do within your local area?

Answers	Number of answers	Percentage
There are plenty	432	36%
There are a few	407	34%
None that I know about	132	11%
There are some, but I do not like them	185	15%
Yes, but they cost too much	42	4%
Not Answered	11	

n=1209

Q3. Are there enough things for you to do on your weekends and holidays? - weekends and holidays

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes	621	52%
Sometimes	433	36%
No	115	10%
Don't know	34	3%
Not answered	6	

n=1209

Q4. There are many free art galleries and museums in Edinburgh. Do you go to any of them? - Free art galleries and museums

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
Often	80	7%
Sometimes	407	34%
Very Rarely	468	39%
Never	247	21%
Not answered	7	

n=1209

Q5. How often do you go outside to play or hang out in your local area (not counting school times)?

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
Almost every day	213	18%
A few days a week	491	41%
Once a week	192	16%
Rarely	258	22%
I don't go outdoors to play or hang out	45	4%
Not answered	10	

n=1209

Q6. Are there enough good parks or greenspaces near you to play/hang out?

Answer	Number of answers	Percentage
Yes, there are lots	496	41%
There are a few	571	48%
No, there aren't enough	125	10%
No, there aren't any	7	1%
Not answered	10	

n=1209

Q7. What is your favourite park or greenspace in Edinburgh?

Analysis of Teenagers' favourite parks and greenspaces

Main parks identified

Park / Greenspace
The Meadows
Princes Street Gardens
Saughton Park
Harrison Park
Spylaw Park
Pentland Hills
Inverleith Park
Corstorphine Hill
Cramond Beach
Botanic Gardens
Clermiston Park
Davidson's Mains Park
Fairmilehead Park
Braidburn Valley Park
Redhall Park
Gyle Park
Montgomery Park
Campbell Park
Holyrood Park/Arthur seat
Victoria Park
Leith Links
St Margaret's Park

Other types of places

Category	Examples / Quotes
Local unnamed spaces	"My local park", "The one behind my house", "The park near my house"
Nature / landscape features	"The hills for walks", "Fields around my house", "The river Almond", "Water of Leith"
Routes / linear spaces	"Roseburn path", "Old railway track path", "The canal"
Sports spaces (informal)	"Astro", "Football pitch", "Basketball court"
Private / home space	"My garden", "My back garden"

Q8. Think about your favourite places for you to hang out/play. What do you like about it? (Tick all that apply)

Items	Number of responses
View	459
Wildlife / nature	463
Benches or places to sit	429
The play equipment is cool	202
It feels safe	364
It is easy to get to	577
It is clean and tidy	269
It has a mix of play equipment	141
Can play football and ball games	310
Can skateboard, play on my scooter or bike	120
It has toilets	162
It is close to home	567
It is fun	595
I feel welcome	259
Other	58

Q9. What stops you from using the outdoors/parks more often? (Tick all that apply)

Items	Number of responses
I can't play the sports I like	147
Hard to organise meeting up with friends	362
Not enough people to do things with	209
I don't have time	368
I don't feel safe	101
Bad weather/too dark in winter	629
Not enough things to do that I like	161
Equipment is only for little kids	321
More things for boys than for girls	96

People complain that we hang out/play there – I don't feel welcome	75
Places are dirty/have broken equipment	203
No benches or places to sit	94
No toilets, no cafes	252
Too far	122
Not allowed/No one to take me	62
Other	95

Q10. What would make it better?

Theme	Illustrative Quotes
Cleanliness & maintenance	"Cleaner", "Less litter", "More tidy, less trash", "Clean up rubbish", "Cleaner and safer", "Lots of rubbish around even tho there are bins", "Less dog poo"
More / better equipment (especially for teenagers)	"More equipment for older kids", "Put actually good equipment", "More playgrounds for big kids", "Less baby things", "Bigger more play equipment"
Public toilets	"More toilets", "Public toilets", "Most of the time the public toilets are shut", "Cleaner bathrooms", "Toilets always open"
Lighting & feeling safe	"More lights", "Better lighting", "Light it up brighter", "If there were street lamps to see in the dark", "Make it feel safer"
Benches & places to sit	"More benches", "More spaces to sit and chat", "Places to sit", "Seats", "More benches and picnic tables"
Food, cafés & shops nearby	"More cafes or places to get food", "Add a greggs", "Water taps so I don't have to carry water", "Cheaper cafes in the park"
More things to do / activities	"More stuff to do", "More fun things", "A greater variety of things", "Have more things to do there"
Teenage-friendly / age-appropriate spaces	"More spaces for teenagers", "Make it for teens", "For all ages – not just little children"
Sports facilities	"More football goals", "Basketball hoops", "Pump track", "More sports facilities", "Indoor basketball court"
Accessibility & proximity	"Be closer to home", "Easier accessibility", "More transport that takes me to parks", "Closer and bigger"
Shelter / indoor spaces	"Shelter from rain and wind", "Indoor places for bad weather", "More sheltered seating areas"
Antisocial behaviour & safety concerns	"No smoking/vaping", "Control the man"

Q11. Are the outdoor spaces you go to clean?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Very Clean	57	5%
Clean	372	31%
Ok	623	52%
Dirty	124	10%
Very Dirty	17	1%
Not Answered	16	

n=1209

Q12. The outdoor play equipment where I go is:

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
In good condition	449	39%
Needs fixing	162	14%
Needs cleaned/painted	144	13%
Needs replacing	251	22%
There is not enough or any play equipment	138	12%
Not Answered	65	

n=1209

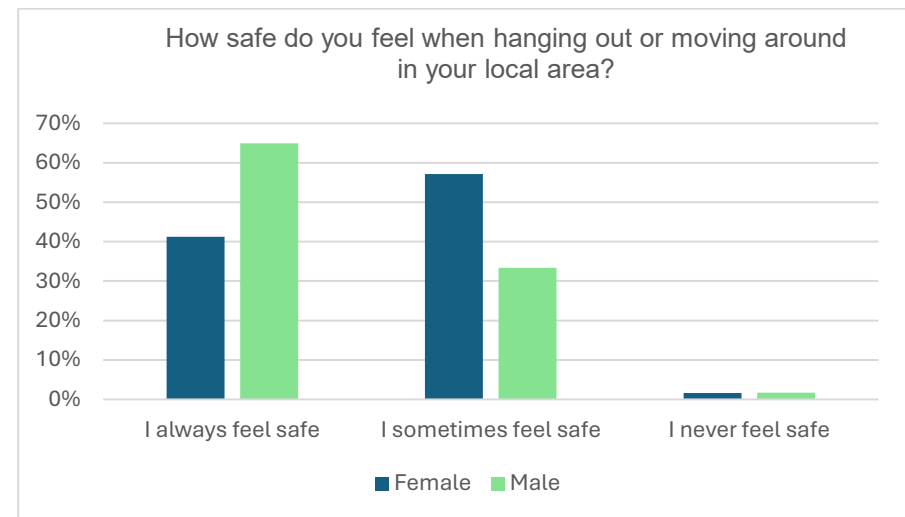
Q13. How safe do you feel when hanging out or moving around in your local area?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
I always feel safe	603	51%
I sometimes feel safe	559	47%
I never feel safe	24	2%
Not Answered	23	

Responses by gender

Answer	Nr of responses Female	Percentage Female	Nr responses Male	Percentage Male
I always feel safe	251	41%	337	65%
I sometimes feel safe	348	57%	173	33%
I never feel safe	10	2%	9	2%
Not Answered	12		9	

n=1209



Reasons for feeling unsafe

If you said 'sometimes' or 'never feel safe', why is that?

Theme	Illustrative Quotes
Darkness / poor lighting (especially winter)	"It gets really dark in winter and not enough street lights", "I feel unsafe when walking in the dark", "It's dark when coming home in winter", "Not enough street lights", "Too dark in the evening", "When it's darker it is unnerving to walk around", "It's too dark"

Unknown / suspicious people	"There's creepy people especially in the dark", "Some sketchy people", "Weirdos about", "You don't know who's about", "People are unpredictable"; "Creepy people who follow me home", "I got followed home in the winter/dark"; "Some dodgy people"; "Sketchy people"
Antisocial behaviour (drugs, alcohol, smoking, vaping)	"Lots of adults and teenagers vaping and smoking", "Drug addicts in my area", "Shady corner shops and drunks" "Sometimes people get drunk on the streets outside and there's lots of vomit on the streets and they just start shouting at you", "Nefarious people and drug addicts" "Junkies"; "theres a lot of drunks and druggies"
Groups / gangs / intimidating teenagers	"Big groups of teenage boys vaping constantly", "Gangs and crime", "Roadmen sometimes are there", "Groups of people my age acting up". "A lot of gangs and junkies roam the streets making it almost impossible for me to go outside at all during the late afternoon to the evening"; "Because there's some teenagers who would harass people and make me feel unsafe"
Fear of crime / violence	"right next to my house in the summer someone got shot with a gun", "People who have tried to start fights", "Stories of violence", "crimes such as stabbings take place"
Feeling unsafe alone / vulnerability	"If it's at night or I'm alone", "Walking around as a girl at night is scary", "I don't like walking on my own"; "Sometimes there are just teen boys in a big group that just scare you a bit as a girl who's probably younger and alone"
General fear / anxiety	"I'm a very anxious person", "I feel paranoid", "General fear", "I'm scared of basically everything"
Local area	"It's just not the safest areas of the city", "My area is dodgy", "I live in a rough area", "Sighthill isn't a good area" "Where I live is close to a place with bad people" "It genuinely is pretty scary walking around just because of the amount of people who have tried to start fights just walking around my own area" "I stay in oxgangs and it's really sketchy"; "The area isn't the nicest, not a nice set of people living there"; "I have heard lots of stories or deaths that have happened in my area"
Traffic / fast vehicles / bikes	"Fast drivers/motorcyclers", "A few times people on quad bikes or motorcycles drive around the park and get very close to me at high speeds", "A lot of traffic"
Dogs / environmental hazards	"Some dogs off their leashes", "people with dogs (big or dangerous ones) because you don't know what could the dog do"

Parents and carers - engagement results

Q1. Which type of outdoor spaces do you usually visit with children and young people? (Please tick all that apply)

Types of outdoor spaces	Number of responses
Formal sports areas (football pitches, basketball, tennis courts etc.)	102
Skatepark/pump track	82
Parks	210
Playgrounds	197
Green spaces near my home	189
Natural areas/woodlands	191
Beaches	159
School grounds after hours/holidays	41
Streets and benches near my home	60
Other	6

Q2. How often do you take children/young people to visit an outdoor space to play or spend time?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Everyday	33	14%
A few times a week	122	51%
Once a week	31	13%
A few times a month	35	15%
Less than once a month	14	6%
Never	2	1%
Not answered	10	

n=247

Q3. How long does it take you to walk, cycle or wheel to your nearest outdoor space?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Less than 5 minutes	83	34%
5-10 minutes	53	22%
11-20 minutes	78	32%
21-30 minutes	17	7%
More than 30 minutes	5	2%
I cannot walk, cycle or wheel there	7	3%
Not Answered	4	

Q4. Is it easy (good paths, ramps, pedestrian crossings, safe) to get to the open spaces in your local area?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Very Easy	55	23%
Easy	89	37%
Neither difficult nor easy	56	23%
Difficult	31	13%
Very Difficult	11	5%
Not Answered	5	

Q5. How safe are the outdoor spaces in your local community for children and young people to play and/or hang-out?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Very safe	27	11%
Safe	110	46%
Neutral	61	26%
Unsafe	28	12%
Very Unsafe	13	5%
Not Answered	8	

Q6. How happy are you with the quality of the outdoor spaces in your local area for your children and/or young people play and hang out?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Very happy	17	7%
Happy	78	32%
Neutral	47	20%
Unhappy	67	28%
Very Unhappy	32	13%
Not Answered	6	

Q7. How happy are you with the outdoor spaces in your local area for children and young people to play ball games such as football, rugby, golf, basketball, tennis etc.?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Very happy	10	4%
Happy	74	31%
Neutral	74	31%
Unhappy	51	21%
Very Unhappy	29	12%
Not Answered	9	

Q8. How do you rate the quality of the outdoor spaces in your local area for playing with natural elements such as sand, rock, water, trees and logs?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Very good	31	13%
Good	72	30%
Neutral	55	23%
Bad	53	22%
Terrible	29	12%
Not Answered	7	

Q9. How happy are you with the number of playgrounds in your area?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Very happy	21	9%
Happy	66	27%
Neutral	60	25%
Unhappy	58	24%
Very unhappy	38	16%
Not Answered	4	2%

Q10. How often do you take children/young people to visit a playground in your area?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Everyday	16	7%
A few times a week	71	30%
Once a week	42	18%
A few times a month	50	21%
Less than once a month	32	14%
Never	25	11%

Q11. Which playground do you visit most often?

The Meadows; Bloomiehall Park ; Inverleith Park; Ratho Station Park; Saughton Park; Spylaw Park; Victoria Park ; Montgomery Street Park ; Leith Links; Morningside Park; Davidson's Mains Park; Sighthill Park; Joppa Quarry Park; Harrison Park; Liberton Park; Figgate Park; George V Park; Pilrig Park; Canaan Lane Park; Seven Acre Park; Pentland View Park; Muir Wood Park; Buckstone Park; Blackford Pond; Fauldburn Park; Gracemount Park ; Pirate Park(Straiton Place); St Margaret's Park; Dean Park; Craigmillar Park; Drylaw Park; Roseburn Park; Buttercup Park ; Bingham Park; Redhall Park; Campbell Park; Cramond Beach; Princes St

Q12. Thinking about that playground - how long does it take you to walk, cycle or wheel there?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Less than 5 minutes	42	18%
5-10 minutes	66	29%
11-20 minutes	81	36%
21-30 minutes	21	9%
More than 30 minutes	10	4%
I cannot walk, cycle or wheel there	8	4%
Not Answered	19	

Q13. How easy (good paths, ramps, pedestrian crossings, safe etc.) is it for you/your child(ren) to walk, cycle or wheel to the playground?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Very Easy	44	19%
Easy	84	37%
Neutral	57	25%
Difficult	29	13%
Very Difficult	13	6%
Not Answered	20	

Q14. What are the best aspects of that playground? (Please tick all that apply)

Best Aspects	Number of responses
Play equipment	93
Surfaces	49
Things to do for children of different ages	64
Access to the	101
Inclusive equipment for children of all abilities	19

Landscaping	28
Overall setting/natural environment	84
Views	33
Cleanliness	44
Safety	51
Seating/picnic tables	44
Meeting with other local parents/carers	66
Meeting place for children	76
Do not know	9
Other	16

Q15. What improvements would make it better? (Please tick all that apply)

Improvements	Number of responses
New equipment	123
More variety of play equipment for different age groups	139
Different surfaces/pavements	56
More seating	108
More picnic tables	101
Better access to the playground	25
Quiet/enclosed spaces to address sensory sensitivity	43
More inclusive equipment for children of all abilities	72
Increasing opportunities for social, sensory, creative, and natural play	65
Improvements to the overall setting	54
Natural environment	41
Toilets/changing places	99
Safety	43
Cleaner	67
Higher fences	11
Lighting	65
Other	25

Q16. Do you think playgrounds in Edinburgh provide inclusive play opportunities for children of all abilities and needs?

Answer	Number of responses	Percentage
Yes	32	14%
No	63	28%
Some	97	42%
Do not know	37	16%
Not answered	18	

Open-ended comments:

Theme	Quotes
Maintenance, poor quality and lack of investment	"The Gyle park had its play equipment removed over a year ago and it's still missing so the kids just run around as there is nothing else to do" "Most of the play areas in our area are handled by CEC and are in disrepair." "The playground in the same area is a disgrace." "There needs to be rangers to monitor rubbish and equipment to ensure a clean and safe environment at all times" "Very poor quality, require maintenance and new equipment." "Most playparks in Edinburgh have areas where there used to be a piece of play equipment which has broken and been removed." "Northfield and willowbrae community centre park needs a makeover. It is old, dirty and unsafe." "They need dramatically improved." "We had a skate park that was taken down and never replaced" "Please stop making playparks worse when you redo them. Morningside park was so much better when it had a helter skelter rather than the tiny trampoline that replaced it." "Our playgrounds are really behind those in other parts of the world." "Equipment really does need to be upgraded." "When equipment breaks please replace it!" "Just that they used to be so much better but barely seem to get maintained at all now." "The Buckstone playpark needs an upgrade." "Broken Glass bottles a problem"

	"Our local park would be 5mins from our home in Newbridge but the facilities are not well kept and neither are the grounds." "The Southside play park in Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park Local Nature Reserve was vandalised years ago and has never been replaced." "Pentland View park's climbing frame is now getting dangerous... Its old, tired and needs a refresh" "The ones in our area are very dated." "Play spaces on the Portobello Promenade need improved." "The equipment from the Ratho parks was removed and not replaced." "Please return the slide to Ratho Park." "There are closer play parks however these tend to have been put in place by housing developers and are poorly planned and poorly constructed - almost like token gestures. Better quality facilities at new housing would be an improvement." "The funding seems to get funnelled to other areas. Seems like Cramond, d mains and Barnton don't receive equal funding" "A bit sterile!!" "Really bad." "They need revamped" "Currie is a big family area and its parks are worse than those of the city and surrounding areas".
Lack of provision for older children and teenagers	"There is too much focus on primary school aged children." "When considering places to play there is often a real focus on very young children, and not enough on older children and teenagers." "There needs to be more provision for 10–15 year olds." "Not enough play opportunities for all age groups or those with additional needs" "Very little provision for older children." "There are not enough skateparks in Edinburgh for older children/young teenagers" "Play equipment should take account of different abilities, which also includes older kids. Not just little ones" "...I would say any children over the age 6 there isn't anything for them to use in it" "It's good for young children, absolutely nothing for teens." "Playground often for little kids, not older kids."

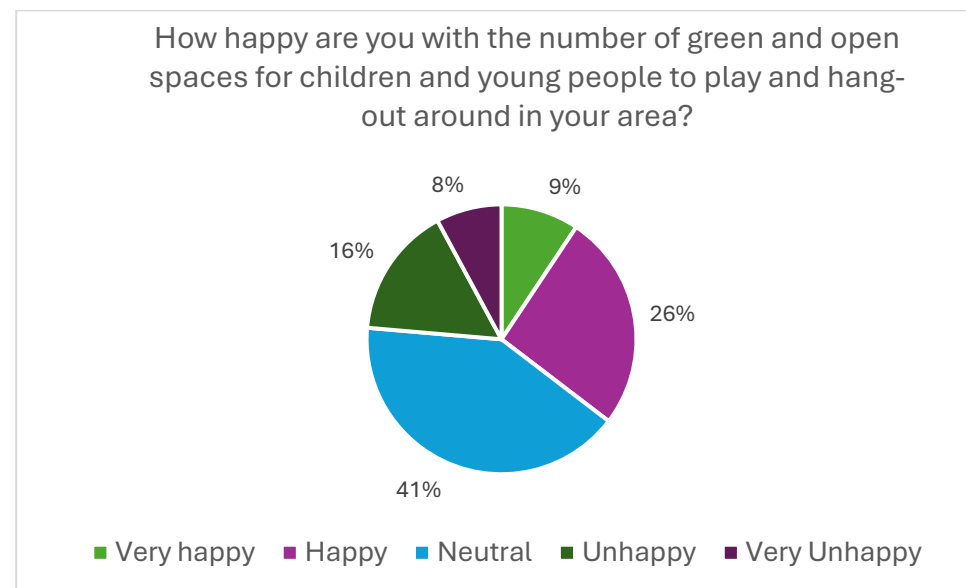
	"You need to think about teenagers not just primary school age children." "Our nearest playground is Inverleith (20min walk) but our older two children complain that there's nothing to play on apart from 2 swings. It's geared for <5 years." "They should prioritise spaces for young people."
Safety and anti-social behaviour	"As a parent of kid ok kids my main concerns are safety (issue with teenagers mentioned previously in balaclavas and also safety of equipment provided for big dogs play) and cleanliness" "It's very usual that broken glass is encountered in the play park and the skate ramps opposite the playpark." "Increased policing of the Meadows is required." "Often adults smoking cannabis nearby." "Stop speedy cyclists and scooters going through the park." "The Southside... The area feels unsafe, with ongoing antisocial behaviour, groups of disruptive youths and drunken activity at night, which discourages families from using it. There is a clear need for well-designed facilities such as a skate park and paddle sports areas, alongside CCTV and better management, to make these spaces safe, inclusive, attractive and actively used." "Lighting to public parks & green spaces very low." "NOT SAFE." "Roads can often be busy and dangerous." "too much cars and cyclists on the roads, not safe for kids to go out and walk/cycle to playgroup with their friends" "...but can be restrictive in darker days due to lighting etc"
Dog fouling, dogs and cleanliness	"Create dog free areas for children to play outside formal play parks. Having dogs about puts me off taking kids to Cramond or Corstorphine Hill." "I have a small baby who can't use the playground yet. I like her to be able to be on the ground outside and feel the grass, see the trees etc. The problem is that there are dogs around in all of the parks, so I'm not happy having her on the ground or mat when dogs are running around, and some owners don't pick up their dog poo which doesn't make for a nice environment for the baby." "I would like to see less dogs and poo." "Dogs should be on short leads at all times."

	"Dog shit is everywhere. It's like walking through a minefield when you set foot on the grass at Bingham Park, Medway or Magdalene Glen" "Every time we visit our local park I have to clean dog poo off my daughter's shoes." "Dogs should be forcibly excluded from all play areas." "Big dogs can be frightening for small children if not on a lead."
Inclusive play and accessibility	"Not enough play opportunities for all age groups or those with additional needs." "Our park... certainly isn't any good for children with access needs." "For our playground to actually be accessible at the moment a wheelchair user or someone with mobility cannot access it let alone use the dated play equipment" "There needs to be much more thought given to inclusive play." "Montgomery street park.... removed opportunities for solo play that are often needed by autistic children." "Our parks are dated and non-inclusive and as a result they are horribly under-used." "Accessible and well maintained toilets are so important."
Need for more local play space	"It would be good if there were more small "doorstep" play spaces for young children in the area." "Too few play areas in the southern parts of EH9." "There nearest one is .75 miles away." "There aren't any kids play areas in 'my area', I need to travel somewhere else - specifically juniper green" "Not enough playparks, for example there's absolutely no playpark in the whole Baberton area, only in Juniper Green." "We need a park in Baberton area." "Few and far between." "The southern suburbs are not well served." "The Meadows play areas are great but are too far away for toddlers. Please invest in Blackford Pond!" "We end up driving across the city to go to Victoria or Saughton so the can at least join in and play too." "There should be more eg at mayfield road park" "Local kids in Magdalene are really missing out. There is nowhere for when kids should be able to go somewhere independently but not too far". "We could do with bins inside the play parks."

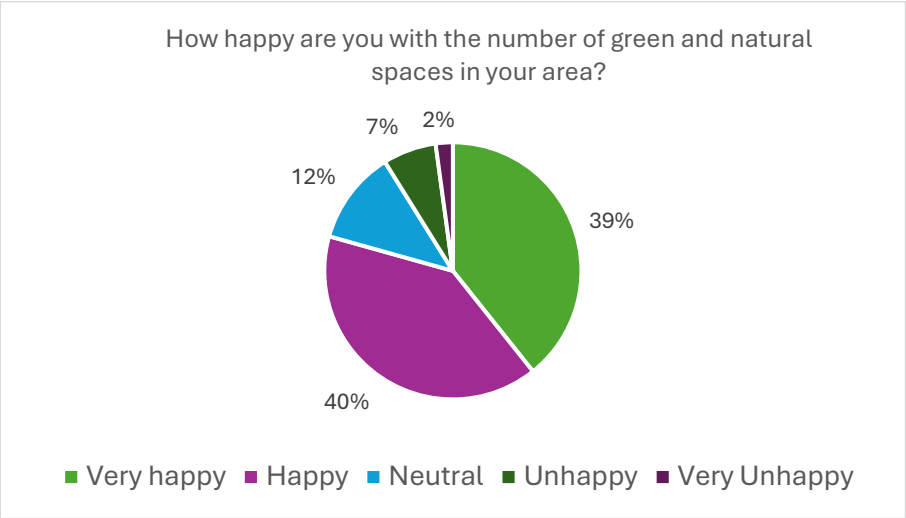
	"We don't take the children as often as we should because it's a long way to all of the play parks. The Meadows ones are the best but the one at the east is stressful because it's so busy and big, so it hard to keep track of both kids" "Saughton is a super facility, but it takes almost an hour to get there if not using a car."
Toilets, seating and supporting facilities	"Not enough toilet facilities which are non existent in some play parks where those with medical needs struggle." "More sitting for parents with additional needs or medical condition along with shelters so play can be enjoyed in all weather." "There need to be way more bins and regular collection." "Toilets are critical." "Need new play equipment and places to sit." "Access to public toilets could be improved at the beach." "Toilets in more parks all year round would be amazing." "They're all so windy! There's got to be a better way than shivering in the wind while watching our kids" "All play areas should have baby changing facilities and toilets nearby." "I've noticed a lot of play parks favour a blue bench with no back - it would better to have a style with a back for breastfeeding."
Positive feedback and value of outdoor play	"Many spaces have been upgraded over the last few years which is very positive" "Outdoor play is so important and playparks are the easiest way for parents to provide this while also allowing kids to socialise. They are free and open 24/7 - a lifeline at times." "they are all a bit run down i guess but we do go to them and enjoy them!" "There really isn't anything I can think of that could bring the most joy to the most residents than seriously investing in a new generation of playparks." "I think they are generally very good."
Sports	"More football pitches" "More skateparks" "improved play park, 5aside pitch with basketball hoops, a skatepark, possibly even more"

Members of the Public - engagement results

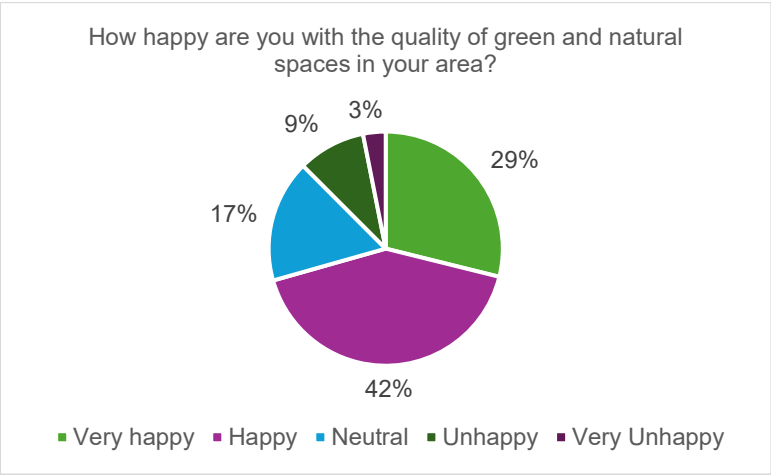
Q1. How happy are you with the number of green and open spaces for children and young people to play and hang-out around in your area?



How happy are you with the number of green and natural spaces in your place?

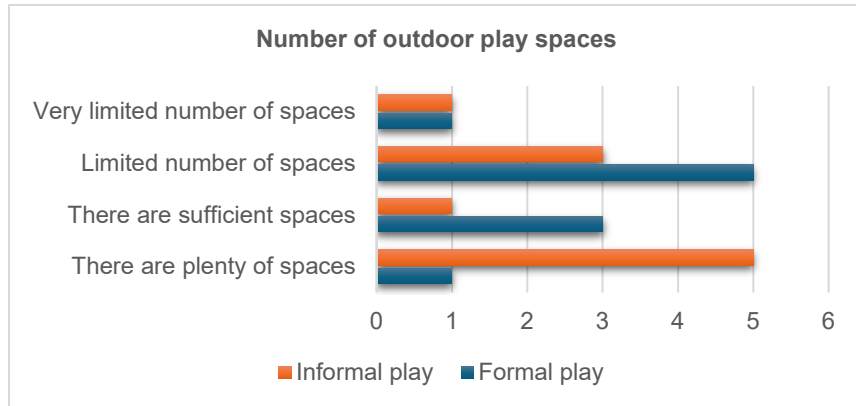


How happy are you with the quality of green and natural spaces in your area?

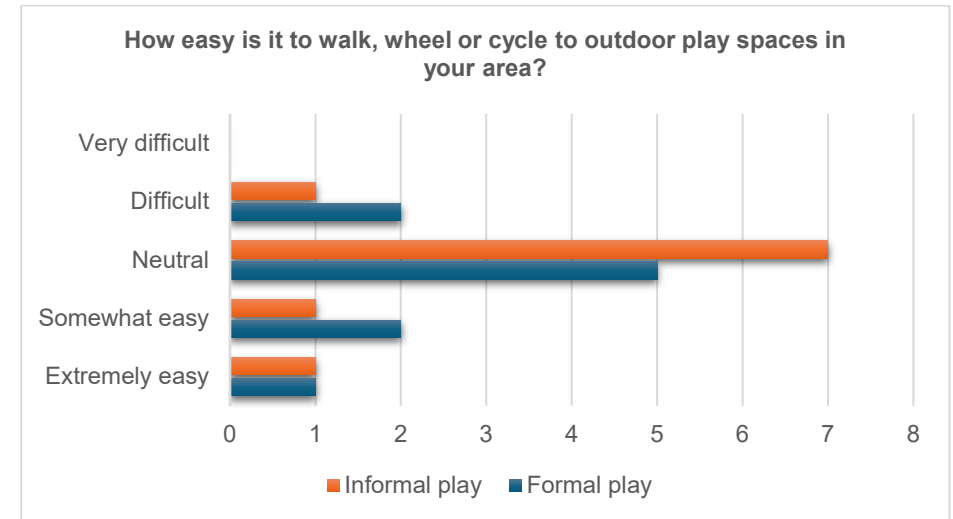


Community Council - engagement results

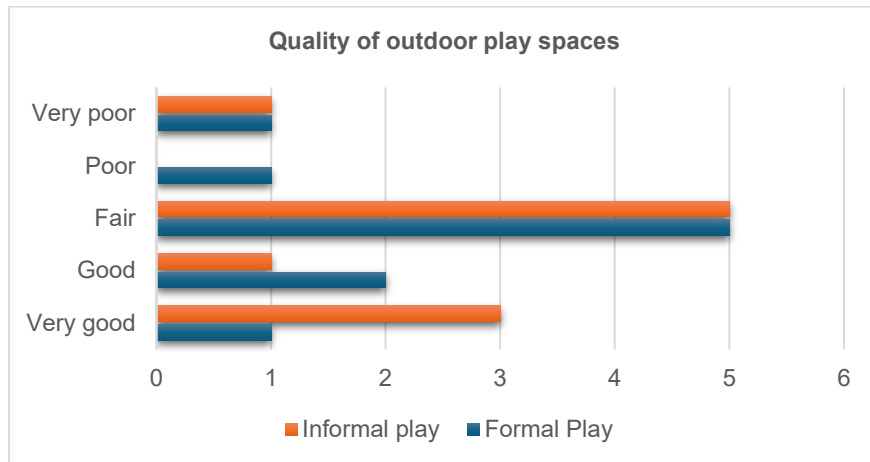
How would you describe the number of (formal/informal) outdoor play spaces in your area? - (single-choice, 10 responses total)



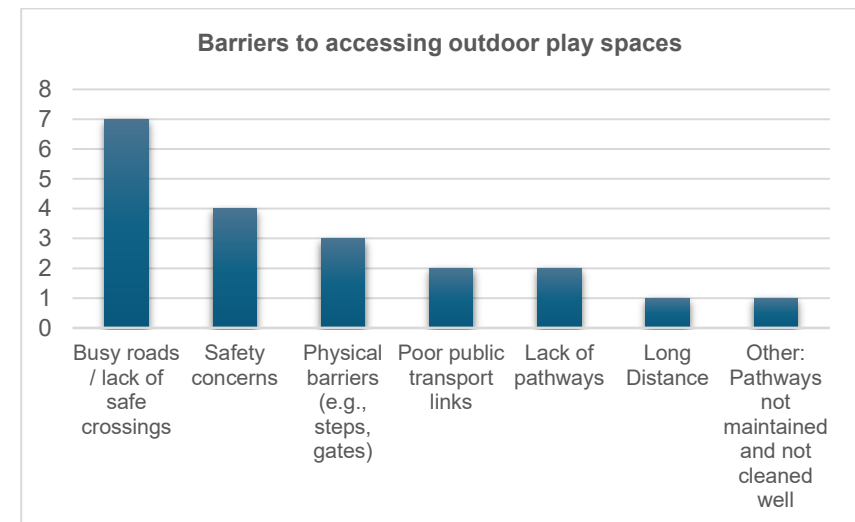
How easy is it to walk, wheel or cycle to (formal/informal) outdoor play spaces in your area? (single-choice, 10 responses total)



Overall, how would you rate the quality of formal/informal outdoor play spaces in your area? (single-choice, 10 responses total)



Are there any barriers to accessing outdoor play spaces? (multiple choice)



How inclusive do you feel local outdoor play spaces are for children of all abilities, backgrounds and ages? (single-choice, 10 responses total)



CityPlan2040

Supporting Document

Play Sufficiency Assessment

June 2026



www.edinburgh.gov.uk/its

email: its@edinburgh.gov.uk

reference xx-xxxx

0131 242 8181